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**DRAKE**

**ON**

**INTEMPERANCE.**

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A  
DISCOURSE  
ON  
**INTEMPERANCE;**

DELIVERED AT CINCINNATI.

March 4, 1828,

BEFORE

**THE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY**

OF HAMILTON COUNTY,

AND SUBSEQUENTLY PRONOUNCED, BY REQUEST, TO A POPULAR

AUDIENCE

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BY DANIEL DRAKE, M. D.

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*"The pestilence that walketh in darkness."*

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CINCINNATI:

Looker & Reynolds, Printers.

.....  
1828.

DISTRICT OF OHIO, *Set.*

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the first day of May, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-eight, and in the fifty-first year of American Independence, A. Wright, of said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"A Discourse on Intemperance; delivered at Cincinnati, March 1, 1828, before the Agricultural Society of Hamilton County; and subsequently pronounced, by request, to a popular audience. By DANIEL DRAKE, M. D. 'The pestilence that walketh in darkness' "

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books to the proprietors of such copies, during the time therein mentioned;" and also of the act entitled "An act supplementary to an act entitled an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

WILLIAM KEY BOND,

*Clerk of the District of Ohio.*



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TO

**JOSHUA L. WILSON, D. D.**

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR—

*Permit me to inscribe to you the following Discourse ;—and to add, that I am happy, in having an opportunity which admits of my bearing public testimony, to your able and intrepid exertions, in the great cause of Education, Morals and Christianity.*

*With respect and esteem, your*

*Friend and very obedient servant,*

DANIEL DRAKE.



## PREFATORY NOTE.

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THE following Discourse, prepared at the request of the Agricultural Society of Hamilton County, Ohio, was delivered before a public meeting of that body, in the Court House, on the 1st of the present month. As a number of public spirited individuals were desirous of instituting an association for the promotion of temperance, the same Discourse, considerably enlarged in its declamatory parts, was again delivered, on the 8th inst. in one of the churches of the city, to a mixed audience of gentlemen and ladies; immediately after which, a resolution was adopted for organizing the contemplated society. In obedience to a vote of the association before which it was first pronounced, it is now committed to the press, in the hope, that although a hasty, and no doubt in many respects an imperfect performance, it may contribute something to that cause, which every good citizen should feel himself bound to promote.

From a resemblance in the plan of this Discourse to the Sermons of the Rev. Dr. Beecher, the Author feels it due to himself to state, that he had not an opportunity of perusing those able and eloquent Sermons, until after his Discourse was delivered.

*Cincinnati, Ohio, March, 1828.*



# **CONTENTS.**

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## **CHAPTER I.**

Of the Chemical Nature of Ardent Spirits

## **CHAPTER II.**

Of their Operation and Effects.

## **CHAPTER III.**

Of the Necessity for their use.

## **CHAPTER IV.**

Of the Causes of their Abuse.

## **CHAPTER V.**

Of the Diseases which they occasion.

## **CHAPTER VI.**

Of their Desolating effects, on Character, Fortune and Family

## **CHAPTER VII.**

Of the Correctives of Intemperance, both Moral and Physical.

## **APPENDIX.**

No. I. Alcohol and its Combinations.

II. Combustion of the living bodies of habitual drunkards

III. Mental Alienation occasioned by Intemperance.

IV. Physical remedies for Drunkenness.

V. Society in Cincinnati for the Promotion of Temperance



A  
*DISCOURSE*  
ON  
**INTEMPERANCE.**

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**CHAPTER I.**  
**OF THE CHEMICAL NATURE OF ARDENT**  
**SPIRITS.**

SCARCELY any one is ignorant of the fact, that when vegetable substances containing sugar, are broken down, and mixed with water, and the compound is left to stand in a moderate degree of heat, an intestine motion takes place, and the ingredients undergo a variety of changes. This is vinous fermentation. If the mixture, at a certain stage of this process, is subjected to distillation, a transparent fluid, lighter than water, and of a peculiar, hot and penetrating taste, is obtained. This liquor is Ardent or Distilled spirits; and consists, essentially, of water, and another fluid, imparting the properties which are expressed by the word ardent or burning. In popular works, and in treatises on the Arts, this ingredient is called spirit of wine, because it was originally obtained by distilling that liquor; but the chemists denominate it **ALCOHOL**, a word adopted into the languages of Europe, from the Arabians, who at a certain time were devoted to the study and practice of Chemistry. Alcohol, strictly speaking, does not exist in nature. It is

formed out of three of the elementary ingredients of plants, carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen, united with each other in definite proportions, during the process of fermentation. Thus it constantly makes a constituent part of wine, beer, cider, and, indeed, of almost every fermented beverage. But in all of them, it exists in a much smaller proportion than in whiskey, brandy, rum, and other distilled spirits; and is moreover disguised by the presence of undecomposed sugar, several different acids, the bitter principle of the hop, and other ingredients, which are absent from distilled spirit, because they are not so volatile as to rise in distillation. Ardent spirits, then, are alcohol diluted with water; and the various kinds of fermented drink are alcohol, still more diluted, and at the same time abounding in other substances, which give them a complicated and nutritious character.

It is well known that some one or more of these liquors, are generally and copiously drunk by almost every nation. In one country we find wine the national drink, in another beer, in a third cider,—in the Western Country it is the spirit distilled chiefly from rye and Indian corn. Other drinks are in use, but the quantities consumed are comparatively so small, that this may fairly be considered our national beverage, and to its use and abuse I shall limit my remarks.



## CHAPTER II.

### OF THE OPERATION OF ARDENT SPIRITS.

THE various reasons given for the use of ardent spirits imply, that they are a hot and stimulating drink; and all experience testifies, that in large draughts they act as an irritant, and, finally, prostrate the strength, to which they gave a momentary activity. These facts clearly prove, that they are an agent of great power. Their influence reaches, indeed, to almost every part of the body. When taken in moderate quantities, by those who are not accustomed to their action, they excite in the stomach, a glow, which is sometimes pleasurable, at others painful: the heart is made to beat with more frequency and force, so that the blood circulates with greater liveliness through all the organs: the brain feels the genial impulse, and, immediately, begins to perform its functions in a higher tone: motion, sensation, feeling and thought, become more active, and for a time the whole man, both in soul and body, is animated beyond his usual state; but if no other portion be swallowed, he soon falls back to that condition. If, however, while the effect of the first dose is still upon him, he should take a second or more, a temporary fever is excited. His pulse beats boisterously, his feelings and actions become intemperate, his courage is transformed into rashness, and his trains of thought move onward in gay and giddy disorder. No more being swallowed, this condition, in a short time, gives place to one of languor and inefficiency; but if additional draughts be taken, the symptoms of high excitement yield to those of debility, perverted sensation, and idiotic or brutal delirium. At last, a total inability to stand, or even sit, a feeble

and irregular pulse, vomiting, stupor and deep sleep, terminate the paroxysm; and, passing off, leave the individual in a state of exhaustion, from which he does not fully recover under two or three days. Such are the effects of copious draughts of ardent spirits taken at short intervals. If a large portion be swallowed at once, instant death may be the consequence. Thus, Mr. Brodie, a distinguished English surgeon, found that a table spoonful of alcohol thrown into the stomach of a rabbit, would destroy life in a few minutes. But we are not dependent on experiments of this sort, for proofs, that ardent spirits are a deadly poison; for the fatal accidents which they occasion in society, are unfortunately too numerous. A striking fact of this kind, was once communicated to me, by the late Dr. Frederick Ridgely of Kentucky, who belonged to the medical staff of our revolutionary army. A soldier, when so far restored from a fever, as to walk about the esplanade of the fort, drank, at a single draught, half a pint of whiskey, and instantly fell down dead! Other melancholy accidents, in our own times, might be referred to with advantage; and I will mention one, which shows, not only the fatal power of ardent spirits, but, what is of more importance at this moment, the way in which their habitual use by some, may occasion the death of others. In Lexington, a few weeks since, a poor widow with three children, happening to reside near a cotton bagging factory, observed the operatives to drink freely, and was induced to procure a barrel of whiskey, and retail it to them, as a means of contributing to the support of her little family. But a sad consequence ensued. Within a short time, when she herself was gone to market to purchase food, they drew, and in imitation of her customers, drank freely of the poison: when she returned they were all prostrate, and within a few hours one of them was a corpse.

It is, however, unnecessary to multiply facts, to establish the propositions, that ardent spirits are a great quickener and disturber of the animal system; a warm and irritating poison; in moderate doses imparting an unnatural excitement; in excessive draughts suddenly extinguishing life: thus resembling, in their effects, a number of deleterious vegetable substances—such as stramonium, hemlock, the prussic acid, and opium—which we label as poisons, and place beyond the reach of the imprudent and the ignorant.

## CHAPTER III.

### OF THE NECESSITY FOR USING ARDENT SPIRITS.

HAVING briefly stated the nature and effects of ardent spirits, we come, in the third place, to inquire whether their habitual use is necessary to the preservation of health, and to the due performance of the offices of human life. No one, unperturbed by intemperance, could be hardy enough to answer these questions in the affirmative; for such a reply would involve a downright absurdity. Ardent spirits do *not* constitute one of the natural and necessary supports of life. He who created man in infinite wisdom, could not have made it a condition of his healthy existence, that he should resort, daily, to an agent of artificial origin, and of such power that it might suspend his activity, or even put an end to his existence in a single hour.

Bread and meat, warmth, air and water, are the appointed sustainers of human life. It is scarcely possible to use them to excess, and without them we languish and die.—God has implanted in us a desire for them, because they are necessary to our existence and well being. Hunger and thirst are natural appetites, but ardent spirits can satisfy neither. True, they will for a short time suspend the cravings of hunger, and finally destroy the appetite for food; but they produce these effects by exciting in the stomach an irritation, which is in fact a real disease. Thus instead of satisfying our desire for sustenance, ardent spirits *annihilate* it:—an admirable piece of service to a poor fellow, shipwrecked upon a barren rock, in the midst of the ocean; but a very different affair, to the inhabitants of the fat and fruit-

ful banks of the Ohio, where a good appetite can detract from no man's happiness. Ardent spirits, indeed, impart no nourishment; and he who might be reduced to short allowance, would live longer without than with their pretended aid, though perhaps less merrily.

Nor will they quench thirst. The natural appetite, calls for water only. Water makes more than nine tenths of the blood, and other fluids of the body; and this proportion must be maintained, or we suffer decay of health.—Hence the disposition to drink is, perhaps, the deepest rooted of all our desires; and, when not gratified, it becomes, at last, the most tormenting. But the desire is not for *ALCOHOL*. It is for water; and nothing *but* water can satisfy it. True it is, that other fluids are sometimes substituted; but water makes the basis of the whole; and they are efficacious, in quenching thirst, and supplying the wants of the system, in proportion to the quantity in which that fluid enters into their composition. Thus brandy, gin, and whiskey; the different kinds of wine, beer, porter, lemonade, punch, milk, whey, chocolate, tea and coffee, contain proportions of water, varying from one half to ninety nine hundredths, and it is in virtue of this *water*, and *not* of the ingredients which it holds in solution, that they are able to quench thirst. Indeed, with the single exception of the native vegetable acids, which some of them contain, the water that enters into their composition is more efficacious in allaying thirst, if given in its purity, than when thus adulterated with foreign matters. Ardent spirits, then, remove thirst, and supply the waste of the system, by means of their *water* instead of their *alcohol*; and, hence, in reference to our natural desires and wants, the latter is unnecessary and indeed inapplicable.

But although not required nor qualified, to satisfy either hunger or thirst, and, therefore, not called for under ordinary

circumstances, *extraordinary* occasions are said to require the use of ardent spirits. For the sake of argument, let us suppose such cases to exist. If they do, is the *habitual* use of ardent spirits, the way to give them *occasional* efficacy? This is, indeed, the most certain method of rendering them inert and useless, in the emergencies that are said to demand their aid. Becoming accustomed to their action, the system is rendered insensible to their animating influence, when it is most needed. If our paths are beset with perils, which we suppose cannot be passed through, without the aid of an artificial stimulant, let us reserve it, till we reach the time and place of difficulty. The soldier who should exhaust his magazines upon a distant enemy, would make but a sorry defence, when the foe approached within striking distance; and still he would not act more absurdly, than the man who attempts to fortify himself against *occasional* assaults, by *habitual* stimulation.

But is it a *fact*, that ardent spirits *can* sustain us under exposures and emotions, to which we should yield without their agency? I do not hesitate to say, that, in general, their aid is altogether imaginary; while in many cases, their treacherous influence, sides with the enemy—which a delusive hope whispered to us, they would vanquish. Let us now briefly inquire into some of the cases which are said to call for their use.

1. *Exposure to cold.* Habitual drinking, so far from protecting us against cold, actually renders us more liable to injury from it. The drunkard is, indeed, peculiarly tender, in this respect. But when the temperate are subjected to it, should *they* resort to strong drink? If the exposure is brief, such a resort may be permitted; but it is then, in general, unnecessary. If it be protracted, I see no reason to believe that its pernicious effects can be warded off by the stimulus of ardent spirits. That agent, it is true,



can increase for a time the generation of heat in the body; but the law of the animal system is, that if actions are raised above their natural degree by artificial means, they afterwards fall below it—so that he who can brave the cold, in the hour of intemperate indulgence, sinks under it in the period of weakness that follows. He is alternately less and more vulnerable than the man, who, mounting to no delusive elevation, suffers no dangerous depression; but moves forward on a uniform and safer level.

2. *Exposure to intense heat.* This is always attended with danger; but ardent spirits cannot diminish the hazard. When too much heat is retained in the system, because the hot atmosphere conducts off too little, why should we increase its production by a stimulating drink? The true preventives are water, vegetable food [abundant in warm climates] and rest in shaded situations, during the heat of the day. With these, ardent spirits are, at least, superfluous—without them, decidedly pernicious.

3. *Exposure to moisture.* Wet clothes, a damp atmosphere, fogs, moist ground, and water, conduct off the heat of our systems with great rapidity, even if the weather and water are not actually cold. Under this kind of exposure, the exciting influence of ardent spirits is thought by almost every body, to be indispensable to the preservation of health. The remarks just made are applicable, with but little variation, to these cases. If the exposure be slight and casual, a single draught may do good; but if prolonged, or constantly recurring, the system must be supported by other agents, less transient, and less irritating, in their effects. Of these, active exercise, a diet of animal food made savoury with salt and other condiments, strong coffee or tea, and the application of great warmth to the feet at night, are the means on which we may rely with the greatest confidence.

4. *Fatigue* is said to render ardent spirits necessary. It may be admitted that intemperate persons cannot make great exertions, or endure fatigue, without drinking; but with the utmost aid of their boasted stimulants, they are unable to perform so much as mere water drinkers. Most of the exceptions to this remark are delusive. Many powerful men are addicted to the excessive use of ardent spirits, and are thought, by superficial observers, to owe their bodily strength to what their firm constitutions, alone, enable them to resist. For a while, they continue strong, in spite of the enervating effects of dram drinking. But the stoutest will, at last, yield to that, which promptly subdues the weak; and neither acts wisely, to resort to an agent, which is superfluous to the vigorous, and useless to the feeble. Both, however, may derive assistance, in a single effort, from ardent spirits, provided their systems are not habituated to the action of that liquor; but when long continued labors are to be performed, all are injured by the unnatural stimulation. The repetition of the dose, never fails to irritate the inner surface of the stomach, and that irritation as infallibly produces weakness.

Thus it is quite obvious, that those who are exposed to cold, heat, or moisture, or are compelled to make great or long continued exertions, cannot derive any substantial aid from the use of ardent spirits. They should not, therefore, resort to them, because they may thus contract a *habit* of drinking; and all who do this, whatever may have been their native resolution, are liable in the end to fall its victims. In support of these various conclusions, every observing man must have met with many individual examples. As triumphantly establishing the first, I may refer to the case of those who survey our public lands. No persons in the community endure such fatigue, or are so much exposed—in summer



to burning heat, when traversing extensive prairies; in winter to intense cold; and, in spring and autumn, to cold and moisture combined,—for they often wade through snow and half frozen marshes for whole days, and lodge for months on the damp ground;—and yet, as I have been assured by Mr. Arthur Henrie, a surveyor of experience and observation, they in general enjoy excellent health, though destitute of the pretended aid of ardent spirits. The number of persons who have, within the last twenty-five years, been employed in surveying the national domain, between the Gulf of Mexico and the Lakes, has amounted to several thousand; and a more conclusive experiment, therefore, could not well be made.

Hence it appears that those who resort to ardent spirits, as a means of support under exposure and great fatigue, commit a most fatal error. The laboring men of the country, who are often required to make great exertions, and are exposed to cold, to heat and to moisture—market people—butchers—waggoners and draymen—boat men, subjected to fogs and the dampness of night—post riders and stage drivers—country physicians, who, in thinly settled places, are compelled to make long professional journeys at night, under every inclemency of the weather—fishermen—stone-quarriers and well diggers—laborers on our canals, lodged almost in the open air—salt manufacturers—forge, furnace and foundry men—finally, hard laborers, operatives, and mechanics, of every sort, should be solemnly and affectionately warned, that when, under exposure or in great exertion, they rely on the aid of ardent spirits, they “lean upon a broken staff.” Of their hard and honest earnings, they give a part—sometimes a *large* part—for that which gradually undermines the vigor of body they would preserve, and on which all their success in life perhaps depends. Many of them are

the victims of this false theory, whose suggestions so coincide with their appetites, that they can be saved, only by being instructed. The task is one of difficulty and discouragement, but we should not be dismayed. It is the duty of physicians to disclose the truth—of philanthropists to urge and enforce its adoption.

5. *Certain perplexed or painful states of mind* are thought to require, or at least to be palliated by, ardent spirits.—Thus, they are supposed to lend salutary aid to the exhausted student, whose ardour still glows, when the flame of his midnight lamp has expired;—to the merchant or capitalist, distracted by the cares and casualties of an extensive, complicated and precarious business;—to those whom folly or misfortune has suddenly thrown from a higher estate;—to physicians, when compelled to devote the natural hours of sleep to inquiry, deep thought, and painful anticipation, over the bed side of the sick and dying;—finally, to the mourner, who rejecting all companionship, but that of his own sorrows, holds communion with the dead throughout the livelong night; or wandering abroad, amidst all the gaieties of society, or all the grandeur and beauty of nature, still feels himself in solitude, and perceives around him only a dreary waste. Could ardent spirits sustain and cheer us under these trials, the most scrupulous would scarcely prohibit their use; but alas! reason declares them inadequate, and universal experience confirms the decision. For the regrets and inquietude of human life, they are the most fatal resort that human ingenuity has ever suggested. Their use converts perplexity into confusion, and adds fuel to the consuming influences of grief; it solves no problem, wards off no impending misfortune, and rolls permanently away, not a single cloud of sorrow;—but, adding irritation of body to agony of soul, it dooms to swifter destruction the unfortunate wretch who trusts to its power.

6. Lastly, several *chronic diseases* are supposed by the people and some physicians, to require the daily use of ardent spirits. These are chiefly the long and frightful train of distempers, known under the names of dyspepsia, hypochondriaism, hysteria, palpitation of the heart, and weakness of the nerves. They prevail, especially from the twentieth to the fortieth year, and affecting multitudes of both sexes, are fairly entitled to the "bad eminence" of detracting more largely from the happiness of refined society, than any other class of the diseases, which civilization has brought upon us. Infusing poison into every cup of enjoyment, and rearing spectres in all our paths;—transforming courage into cowardice,—and that period of our lives, which on the plan of nature should be most gay and enterprising, into a state of debility and gloom,—it is not wonderful that they should tempt us to resort to the potent stimulus of ardent spirits. But of the danger of such a resource, no medical man ought to entertain a doubt—though there may be a few cases in which it is salutary. Weakness, it is true, is a prominent circumstance in these affections; but weakness is, in general, the *consequence* of disease, and can only be removed by its cure. Ardent spirits are a medicine, but in such maladies, they are not the remedy in which we should confide. The transient relief which they afford, is followed by permanent aggravation, and those who rely upon it sacrifice the future to the present—unconsciously acting with the folly of the man who wastes by anticipation, his most precious resources.

## CHAPTER IV.

### OF THE CAUSES OF THE ABUSE OF ARDENT SPIRITS.

It is often asked, whether we have a natural taste for ardent spirits? I answer, that we have not; nor have we a natural taste for any thing, which, like them, is purely artificial. We have a natural taste for water, and the productions of the earth; but not for Alcohol, which is the offspring of their decomposition, in the laboratory of the distiller. Alcohol, the intoxicating ingredient of all our beverages, is itself, indeed, one of the most poisonous productions of art; and it is only by great dilution with water, and the artifice of combining it with more savoury ingredients, that we can be induced to swallow it.

But if we have no natural taste for alcohol, why do so many persons take it to excess? I reply, that although we have no natural love for that liquor, we have an innate propensity to the use of stimulants, and are pleased with the excitement which they produce. Within moderate limits it is harmless, and under proper circumstances even useful. It constitutes the poetic fervour of our physical system. All our organs will act, and do their duty in a regular business style, without being thus excited; but when moderately stimulated, they work more cheerfully, and we are conscious of the difference. It is this consciousness that prompts us to the habitual use of stimulants, both to the body and the mind; for, in reference to the excitement of which I have spoken, they are governed by the same law. Thus the

news-monger, the inveterate novel reader, the glutton, and the wine bibber, conform to a common principle of our nature. In different countries the modes of stimulating the body are different. The Arabs resort to coffee, the Chinese to tea, the Turks to opium, the French to wine, the English to ale, the Icelanders to rancid fish oil, and we Backwoodsmen to *Whiskey*. For this variety there are causes, some of which are obvious and may be mentioned. Thus coffee is a native of Arabia; tea of China; wine is forbidden in Turkey; the vine flourishes in France; barley and hops attain to great perfection in England; and rye and Indian corn furnish us sturdy republicans with whiskey at so cheap a rate, that the poorest man in the community can get drunk, as often as his wealthiest neighbour:—so that our boasted equality does not entirely rest on the basis of our political institutions.

Among individuals, there is a still greater variety in the manner and means of stimulation, than among nations.—Thus, to draw our examples from home, some regale themselves on tobacco—solid, powdered, or gaseous; others flourish in the midst of political broils; and a few sustain themselves by the stimulus of interminable litigation: the excitement of gaming in its seductive varieties of cards, horse-racing and billiards, is delightful to many; others prefer the stimulants of a table loaded with savoury viands; some could enjoy themselves quite as much, on public executions and horrible accidents, if they would, fortunately, but occur often enough; others are content to read tales of mystery and marvel, provided they are not diluted with the realities of useful knowledge; the thrilling transports of musick captivate a few; tea and coffee exhilarate many more; here and there, we find an individual, unhappily, enamoured with the stupifying influence of opium; finally, a considerable

number relish only madeira, champaign, or constantia wine; a more numerous body guzzle porter and strong beer; but the sheet anchor of the multitude is *Whiskey*.

Under this great apparent diversity of taste and practice, it is not difficult to perceive, that the end in view is nearly the same—the stimulation of our organs, feelings, and faculties into a higher state of excitement. It is for this we have a native taste—an inherent desire—a constitutional longing, which exists from birth, and expires only with the vital spark itself. To this principle, we may ascribe excessive drinking, and almost every other intemperate indulgence. If it were destroyed, drunkenness would disappear from the land. This, however, would involve a change, not merely in the condition, but in the constitution of human nature—an object noither to be accomplished nor desired. We cannot extinguish the propensity which leads to intemperance; but may limit and regulate its indulgence; and to this our efforts should be directed. Let us proceed, then, to inquire into the causes which give inordinate energy to this principle, that, by avoiding them, we may preserve ourselves from the disasters of its unrestricted influence. In this country, they are chiefly the following:

1. *Habitual drinking.* This is, manifestly, a great cause of drunkenness. Custom reconciles us to things the most offensive; then renders them agreeable; and ends by exalting them into objects of uncontrollable desire. Thus, by repetition we are made to relish equally the savour and the effects of ardent spirits; and, at last become drunkards, from taste as well as constitution. I am aware, that there are many who believe, that habitual drinking seldom leads to excessive indulgence; but the facts are against them.—On this question the practice of the society of Friends is conclusive, and deserves universal imitation. The rules of



that respectable community prohibit the use of ardent spirits, except as a medicine, and wherever the proscription has been enforced, drunkenness has nearly disappeared. In Cincinnati, for a quarter of a century, I have had but a single patient of that society, whose disease was referable to intemperance; and at present, when the number of Friends is very considerable, there is, in the whole city, but *one* addicted to intoxication. It is in vain to look within the pale of any other congregation, for a similar state of sobriety; they denounce drunkenness, but tolerating the daily use of ardent spirits, the denunciation is too often of no avail.

Among the varieties of daily drinking, two or three deserve to be held up to public reprobation. One of these may be called family drinking, and, in its least injurious form, consists in handing round among children, what are provincially called *juleps*, *toddies* and *slings*; or other domestic mixtures containing alcohol, and rendered agreeable with sugar and aromatics. Even when confined to the afternoon this practice is objectionable; but extended to the earlier parts of the day it becomes pernicious. I know there are discreet and temperate parents who are its advocates; and argue, that if a child is accustomed to such drinks from its infancy, it will desire them less when it grows up, than if it had been originally debarred their use. But the same parents would not allow their sons to indulge, even momentarily, in any other bad practice, lest they should contract a fondness for it. They do not distinguish, between permitting children to taste ardent spirits, unmixed with "palatable sweets," and their daily use with those pleasant additions. It must be granted, that families reared under this absurd usage, often remain temperate; but whenever there is a native propensity to sensual gratification, intemperance can scarcely fail to occur.

The fashion of offering ardent spirits to our ordinary visitors, is fraught with still greater mischief, and cannot be too soon abolished. Unfortunately it is so general, that few men in society have the consideration or courage to violate it; and, in obedience to the same fatal rule of social intercourse, still fewer have the prudence to drink only when they are dry.

The habits of landlords and bar keepers deserve a passing remark. Many intemperate men resort to these occupations as furnishing the means of support and indulgence, when all other resources are dried up; but granting all this, it is undeniable, that an extraordinary proportion of these people become drunkards, from the custom of drinking, hourly, with those who frequent their establishments. Thus he who is an accessory to the suicide of so many others, becomes eventually the destroyer of his own life.

The intemperance which, in the United States, has prevailed in my own profession, may be considered here. It has been ascribed to the fatigue and watching which physicians are occasionally obliged to sustain; and a portion of it is, undoubtedly, referable to those causes; but it is chiefly owing to their custom of drinking, daily, at the houses of sick persons. Physicians are, or should be, welcome visitors; and in a country where ardent spirits are a constant offering of hospitality, if they drink at all, they are liable, at length, to drink too much. No physician should allow himself to use ardent spirits, until he has passed his fortieth year. Customs of any kind, commenced after that period, are seldom carried to excess; and neither the profession of medicine, nor society at large, would afford so many drunkards, if this salutary rule were observed. I am happy to be warranted in saying, that in our cities, the number of intemperate physicians is fewer than it formerly was;



but in the villages and the country, they are still so numerous, as to bring on the profession a discredit which is truly mortifying. I know of no class of citizens whose examples are more authoritative than those of medical men—especially in what relates to modes of living:—hence, a weighty responsibility rests upon them in this respect; and every considerate man in society, must unite in the hope, that the time is not remote, when they will practice greater self-denial.

But of the various kinds of daily drinking, the most fatal is morning drams. At that hour, the system is more sensible to the action of stimulants, than at any other; and the custom of adding bitters to the ardent spirits, greatly increases the danger of future intemperance; for the more offensive the taste of any substance, the more inordinate is our attachment, when once established. Indeed, no man ever made daily morning visits to the splendid bar-room of a city hotel, or to the homelier shelves of a country tavern, without being, or becoming, a drunkard. The rising sun, which lights the unsteady foot-steps of such a man to the polluted fountain, shall not set early enough to hide his shame. If he be unmarried, let every mother exclude him from her habitation, as she values the peace and character of her daughters;—if married, then should his wife and children prepare, in sadness, for poverty and deep mortification;—if he be in debt, his creditors should beware;—and when he contracts new responsibilities, none should expect them to be met. Society should withdraw its confidence and communion, and impose on him the stamp of its disapprobation, that the virtuous may not be led astray by his example, nor the imprudent brought to ruin in his fall.

2. *The use of ardent spirits in assemblies of men, convened for business or amusement.* Public meetings con-

tribute greatly to intemperance. It signifies little, for what purpose they are held, or of whom composed—if drinking be permitted, it associates itself with the occasion, and ingrafts the sensual upon the social enjoyment. Some will intoxicate themselves, because a good opportunity offers; others in honor of the meeting; and others through a laudable ambition not to be excelled. This one takes an extra glass, because he has met a friend; that one, because he expects to meet an enemy. The old indulge themselves, for the purpose of rising to the mean heat of the party; and the young, out of that *profound respect for age*, which characterizes the youth of America. Thus, if all do not exceed the limits of sobriety, it is not the fault of the occasion, which so happily provides for every one an excuse.

The number of meetings, in the United States, at which drinking is permitted, is far greater, than those who have not made an estimate, would suppose. The public dinners in celebration of memorable events, and in honor of great men, ought, in reference to the morals of the nation, to be made fewer, however deeply the interests of liberty might suffer by the reform. Nearly connected with these absurd meetings in object and effect, but on the whole more pernicious, are the barbecues of the West and South; at which the people exchange habits of industry and temperance, for politicks, conversation, and merry making; and lose the government of their appetites, in learning to “govern themselves.”

Annual horse racing is another occasion for drinking and dissipation. The reason assigned for this public amusement, is directly connected with the Agricultural interest. It is said, to encourage the growth of fine horses. But this, with most of those who promote racing, is only a pretext. The real end is to create a strong and diversified

excitement; which, in general, is attained, whatever may be the fate of the pretended object. But supposing that object to be real and attainable; no moralist or patriot could refuse to condemn racing, unless he adopt the maxim, subversive of all morality, that the end will justify the means. The Olympic games required discipline of body and mind; and, to a certain extent, gave that energy to both, for which the ancient Greeks were distinguished. But these modern games call out the mass of our young men, and array them against each other over the bottle, as their coursers are matched upon the turf. We thus sacrifice the morals of our sons, to improve the speed of our horses!

Intemperance is promoted by several kinds of stated, popular meetings, which are indispensable to the constitution of our free governments. Our annual elections, semi-annual militia trainings, and, in Virginia and Kentucky, the monthly courts of justice, are all of this kind. In Ohio the militia musters are most promotive of dissipation; but in Kentucky, from a difference in the laws, all three, are, perhaps, equally injurious. Every philanthropist should open his eyes to the vices which are practised, by many of those who attend on these occasions. They cannot be abolished, but the intemperance which they generate, might be much abated by the frowns or exhortations of the temperate; and it is truly deplorable that these should be so generally withheld. Great, however, as the drinking on election days really is, it amounts to nothing, in comparison with the aggregated intemperance, which, in some parts of the Western country, grows out of what is denominated the electioneering campaign. Even in common years, the candidates take the field several months before the election;—when a true politico-civil war ensues, and rages, with increasing violence, till the balloting takes place. The intellectual gladiators

are found in array against each other on every public occasion; and when opportunities do not occur, as frequently as they desire, special meetings are appointed. At these the people assemble—some to criticise, others to be instructed, others to encourage the combatants, and others to drink of that, which is so bountifully poured out to all. Throughout the whole period of feverish excitement, the thirst of the multitude waxes greater and greater; and hundreds drink to excess, who under a different mode of conducting the canvass, would pursue their honest occupations, in peace and temperance. All this is perceived and deplored by many of the candidates; but the custom is uncontrollable. Being a species of public institution, no individual can resist its influence; and, sustained as it is by the taste and passions of the people, they only, can effect its overthrow.

3. *Gambling* Vices are gregarious, that is, in the language of agriculture, go in flocks. They obey the universal law of association; and hence gaming, knavery and drunkenness are, sooner or later, found united in the same individual. Without enquiring into the process by which gaming generates intemperance, it is sufficient to know the fact.—Were this the only consequence, then, that flows from that detestable custom, a sufficient motive would exist for discouraging young persons from the use of cards, and every other species of rivalry, that is sustained by betting. I am sorry to know that this is not done; but that the very reverse is the practice of many, who have the superintendence of young persons. They are taught cards and billiards, as innocent amusements, but told not to play for money; which argues a criminal ignorance of the human character, for no passion so speedily fattens on its indulgence as gaming; and the young man who at first sat down to *amuse* himself with an *innocent* game of cards, in the company of accomplished

associates, and surrounded by the elegancies and refinements of the drawing room, may die among the benches of a vulgar tavern—a desperate gamester and drunken outcast. A love of gambling once excited, the dissipation which it may generate is not to be foretold by the sagacity of the wisest, nor averted by the prayers of the most devout; but the wisdom and piety of the land ought to unite in a sentence of condemnation, should their utmost efforts but palliate the mischief.

4. *Trades and occupations which, habitually, bring numbers of men into close connexion, are causes of intemperance.* Hatters, tailors, shoemakers and millwrights, among many others, are in this condition. Of eight or ten persons thus assembled, there will, generally, be two or three veterans, who consider drinking an essential duty of human life; and take special care, by precept and example, to urge it upon their youthful comrades. Thus, a love for strong drink is often generated, in the apprentice, faster than a love for the duties and rewards of the trade; and he ends his novitiate, a botch in every thing but the art of drinking.

5. *Smoking Segars.* This custom, which is both sensual and social in the enjoyment it confers, unquestionably promotes drinking, and should be abolished. When young men assemble together, whatever may be the object, convivial feelings spring up, and they are apt to become thirsty. This condition is, manifestly, aggravated by the excessive smoking in which they then indulge, for it renders the mouth and throat dry. Moreover, tobacco disturbs the nervous systems of most young persons to such a degree, that the stimulus of ardent spirits is, in some measure, necessary to sustain or restore them. As they consider it disgraceful not to break themselves into the habit of smoking, if they once make the attempt, it must be accomplished at every hazard;

and the greater the constitutional repugnance, the deeper the drinking. But as tobacco is poisonous and ardent spirits remedial, as one imparts painful and the other pleasurable sensations, a fondness for the latter is often generated, long before the system has quietly submitted to the impress of the former. This, however, is only a part of the injury, which results from smoking; for it contributes to dyspepsia and the frightful train of nervous disorders, which prey upon our young men, and call for the preventive influence of public sentiment. The nation has an interest in the physical constitution of its youth; and should look to their habits with still greater care, than the husbandman watches over the saplings, which, in future, are to constitute his timber trees. Those who have passed the meridian of life, are seldom injured by smoking; but at the age of twenty, the systems of most *Americans* are too sensitive, to sustain the action of tobacco uninjured.

6. *Matrimonial unhappiness is a cause of intemperance.* It is unfortunate, that so many wives mistake scolding for remonstrance; and drive their husbands into dissipation by indulging in the former, when a proper exercise of the latter would contribute so largely to preserve them from every kind of vice. That many a weak minded husband has been scolded into drunkenness, is undeniable; but others—or their friends for them—have ungenerously ascribed their intemperance, to the scolding, which it had in reality provoked. At best, moreover, it is but a contemptible excuse for getting drunk, that a man is married to a *scold*—in other words to a silly, petulant or garrulous woman. It should rather animate him to increased sobriety, resolution and steadiness; that the peace and character of his family may, as far as possible, remain unimpaired. Husbands, in general, exert more influence over wives, than wives can



exercise over them; and it would better comport with their superior pretensions, to labour in the correction of a wayward temper, than to render themselves insensible to its outbreaks, by the stimulus of ardent spirits. An intemperate wife, who should assign her husband's moroseness, as a reason for her drinking, would find but few persons disposed to admit the validity of her excuse; and the same rule should be applied to the vices of the other sex.

7. *Confectionaries, Coffee Houses, and Retail Groceries.* If the multiplication of drinking establishments affords evidence of an increasing taste for ardent spirits, it is equally certain, that in turn they present new opportunities, and stronger temptations to excessive indulgence. It is melancholy to observe the resort to these sinks of tippling and dissipation. It begins with the dawn of day, and ends not even with midnight. Among the devotees, we see persons of all ages, and of every calling, many of whom are overwhelmed with sottishness, before they are publicly known to have departed from the paths of sobriety. Of all the causes of intemperance, none act more insidiously than this, and the irremediable drunkenness which it generates, should be more dreaded than cancer or hydrophobia; for the victims of an unavoidable disease expire in innocence, amid the sympathies of society; while the sot too often outlives his character, fortune and friends, to die in obscurity and disgrace.

8. *Distilleries.* The multiplication of small distilleries, in the country, gives an effect similar to the increase of groceries, in the towns and villages. When a new distillery is erected in a neighbourhood, an additional establishment for idleness and drinking is opened to all whom curiosity, the desire for company, or the love of drink, can draw from their homes and honest occupations. But this

is no more than a part of the mischief. Distilleries are the only places, where whiskey can be procured, in barter for the grain out of which it is manufactured; and there can be no doubt, that this facility greatly promotes the consumption of that beverage. When a man can obtain a gallon of whiskey, by sending to the distillery a bushel of Indian corn, he is more likely to procure it, than if it could be purchased but with the precious metals. In an agricultural country, where grain is abundant, and money comparatively scarce, men part with the latter more reluctantly than the former. Hence I cannot but regret, in common with many patriotic country gentlemen, the multiplication of little distilleries; and, especially the custom of bartering small quantities of whiskey for corn.

9. Lastly, *the construction of canals, turnpike roads, and other public works, is a cause of intemperance.* Thousands of labourers are employed on these laudable undertakings; and it is deeply to be regretted, that in most, if not all parts of the United States, it is the practice of the contractors, to distribute ardent spirits among them, repeatedly, every day. The pernicious effects of this custom need no kind of illustration, and it should be discontinued; as it is absurd for a nation to project works of public utility, and so conduct their execution, as to corrupt the morals of the people, and thus enfeeble the state. It is the duty of . . . those who superintend these national enterprises, to consider what correctives may be applied to an evil of such increasing magnitude; and some of them, I am happy to know, perceiving the force of this obligation, feel disposed to adopt every means of prevention which the case may admit.

Other causes of intemperance exist in the Western states: I shall not, however, prosecute the unwelcome task any further; but enter on the more pleasant duty of enumerating



those which have either disappeared, or are greatly mitigated.

1. The Indians wars, which prevailed extensively, on both sides of the Ohio, from the peace of 1783, to the treaty of Greenville in 1794, contributed greatly to the intemperance of the early settlers. The standing army, sent to the West, was very considerable, in proportion to the whole population; and, in addition to the *Regulars*, almost every person capable of bearing arms, was at one time or other, ordered into the field. Many young men, indeed, without enlisting, became professional soldiers; by repeatedly hiring themselves, as substitutes, for others who chose to fight by proxy, or could not leave home, when drafted. Throughout the whole of these wars, the practice of drinking was only limited by the scarcity of whiskey; and after their termination, the military, being dispersed among the civil, carried into society an extraordinary proportion of intemperate men, among whom were many distinguished for wealth, or talents, or public services.

The excessive drinking which characterised the western settlements in their infancy, did not begin to abate till twelve or fifteen years after the return of those who had been engaged in their defence, and was undoubtedly in part kept up by their example. A striking feature of the intemperance of that period, was its clamorous and unblushing display. It was no disgrace, and scarcely any discredit, to be seen reeling and boisterous in the public streets; and drinking at the close of dinner parties, balls, and even weddings, was sometimes carried through all the successive stages of gaiety, mirth, and uproar, to a comfortable state of dead drunkenness! Thus opened the 19th century; but at the end of its first quarter, the aspect of society is greatly changed. The generation, who, in the midst of privations

and perils, so gallantly defended the infant Territories, has nearly passed away, and the example of their failings is already extinct; while the story of their heroism will be told to animate our children for years to come.

2. In the peopling of the forest, cabins were to be erected, and the trunks of fallen trees to be rolled together and burnt. These indispensable objects, required men to assemble in large companies; and few employments are more laborious, than what they were obliged to execute. Ardent spirits, of course, were considered necessary; and while they were liberally drunk by the whole, not a few never failed to take them in excess. In the *central* parts of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio, from the progress of settlement, these public occasions have nearly ceased; and with them, of course, the vulgar intemperance by which they were disgraced: but much of it still exists among the frontier population.

3. In the West, particularly to the south of the Ohio river, the wheat and Indian corn harvests were, once, so conducted, as to occasion great insobriety. Each, was made a frolic, and, the latter especially, a drunken frolic, which generally ended in absolute riot. I am happy to be able to say, that, from a salutary change in our agricultural customs, this species of dissipation has nearly ceased.

4. In the earlier periods of our Western settlements, tea, coffee, chocolate and various spices were scarce, and of more difficult attainment than whiskey. Cider and beer were, moreover, almost unknown. Hence men were under the necessity of relying, more than at present, on ardent spirits for the stimulation which, to a certain extent, is necessary to our moral and physical activity; and thus were liable to drink to excess.

5. Formerly, several thousand persons were employed on the barges, and keel and flat boats, which navigated the Ohio and other western streams; and no class of people exhibited such gross and numerous symptoms of dissipation. The age to which they belonged was not very temperate, and the occupation itself naturally attracted the vicious; who, being absolved from every moral restraint, speedily became much worse. From the progress of society, such of them as remain, have improved in their habits, but their number is now greatly reduced; for the small craft which were their homes, have been nearly superseded by steam boats; and the profligate inhabitants have disappeared with the habitations. Thus the genius of Fulton has contributed largely to dispel the moral darkness of our waters, as the sun dissipates the fogs of morning; he has made us better as well as richer; and exhibited to the world, the power of a *mechanical invention*, in the suppression of immorality and vice.

6. Lastly, the pioneers of a new country are less under the dominion of the laws both of God and man, than their descendants; they have less regard for the opinions of others, and intelligent divines are proportionably fewer than in communities like our own. Thus several moral restraints were formerly wanting in the West, which have been since supplied; and their absence, undoubtedly, was a negative cause of intemperance.

These are the principal causes which have ceased to operate, within the last twenty or thirty years. They suggest the question, whether Intemperance itself has declined?—On this subject I have recently asked the opinions of several intelligent men, both of Ohio and Kentucky, and the observations of the majority coincide with my own:—That drinking at public meetings of every kind, and composed

of all sorts of people, is far less than it formerly was; and, that the drunkenness, both public and private, of the wealthier classes—agricultural, professional and mercantile—has decidedly abated; though still in all our towns and cities, there are numerous *gentlemen*, who indulge in habitual and quiet stimulation, till they become *sots*. But there is reason to fear, that among the laboring classes, the practice of daily drinking has increased rather than diminished; and of this melancholy fact it is not difficult to find an explanation. It is manifestly owing, to the abundance and cheapness of distilled spirits, and to the increase of tippling houses. In former times, the high price of whiskey, opposed a barrier to its use among the poor, which the progress of agriculture and improvements in the art of distillation, have broken down; and all experience demonstrates, that men will indulge themselves to greater excess, as the means are brought more within their command. Many men, at that time, could not afford to drink incessantly; and they accordingly reserved the periods of indulgence for convivial meetings: at present, they associate it with their daily labors, and, literally, make a business of getting drunk. This is the crying evil of the land; and is far from being limited to the people of the West; for it prevails, extensively, among the laboring classes of the East.

## CHAPTER V.

### OF THE MORBID EFFECTS OF ARDENT SPIRITS ON THE BODY AND MIND.

WE have already seen that alcohol is a poison. Taken undiluted, even in no great quantities, it kills suddenly;—used daily, in smaller doses, diluted; it is slow poison, and kills at a more distant time—but with equal certainty.—Even a single fit of drunkenness is a disease which may prove fatal; and the frequent recurrence of such an attack, especially in early life, is seldom long sustained. Great injury to health and constitution may, however, be occasioned by the habitual use of ardent spirits, though actual intoxication be studiously avoided. The proper limits of a discourse do not admit of a full account of the various disorders of body and mind that are occasioned by this abuse; but enough may be said, to warn those who are about to yield to temptation, of the diseases they should prepare to encounter.

The disorders of body produced by habitual intemperance, are various in different persons, and at different periods of life.

1. In nearly all, the **STOMACH**, from being the receptacle of the poison, becomes greatly disordered. At an early period the appetite begins to decay, and at last is almost extinguished. The stomach becomes irritable, and vomiting occurs in the morning. At length, a great degree of irritation, and sometimes actual inflammation, takes place in the inner surface of that organ; and indigestion, or dyspepsia, with its loathsome crudities and cankering acids, becomes permanently established.

2. Next to the stomach, the LIVER is, perhaps, the greatest sufferer. At first it is strongly excited, and secretes an excessive quantity of bile, which leads the inebriate to say that he is bilious; for which, with admirable facility, he resorts to bitters: thus recklessly feeding the flame with spirit, instead of quenching it with water. Actual inflammation at length supervenes, and he is harrassed with a slow fever. In the progress of time, the liver becomes changed in its texture, hardened, and obstructed. It fails to secrete bile, and a dark and muddy JAUNDICE indicates the approach of death, which is seldom slow in arriving.

3. From sympathy with the stomach and liver, or in some other way, the LUNGS become affected. A cough supervenes, with an offensive discharge of phlegm in the morning. If the patient were predisposed to asthma, great difficulty of breathing ensues; or, if inclined to consumption, the fatal malady is hastened in its approaches.

4. The feet swell with a DROPSY, not easily removed, and the abdomen becomes the seat of dangerous watery accumulations. Still oftener, a hopeless dropsical effusion takes place into the chest and about the heart, which labors like a wheel under water. The patient has a distressing cough, is unable to ascend to the second story of his workshop, or climb the lowest hill on his farm; finds himself obliged, at length, to abandon every kind of business, for want of breath; and sits up all night for weeks, lest he should be suffocated by laying down—an event which often happens at a moment when it is not expected, by those about him. Many remarkable examples of sudden death, from this cause might be mentioned. I will recite one, which fell under my own observation in this city.

A man with a family, gradually became a sot; and at length fell into a dropsy of the chest. His career of intem-



porance extended through several years, during which his perversions of temper, and inattention to business, of course led to occasional jarrings between himself and his wife—an ambitious and worthy woman. Finally, he died suddenly, and without any special warning, about the dawn of day, having risen and dressed himself. I reached the house as he breathed his last, and was in no degree surprised, for I had forseen the termination of his career. But some of his neighbors, being ignorant of what might, rationally, be expected, were in a very different state of mind; and before night, it was insinuated that the wife had committed murder. Thus the intoxication of the husband, which embittered the existence of his companion for years, might at last have brought upon her the horrible reproach of having caused his death, had no professional man been present to make the explanations necessary to her exculpation.

5. GOUT is well known to be the offspring of intemperance; but, from the influence of other causes, it is a rare disease in the United States, especially in the West. Rheumatism is, however, a frequent malady; and, in its chronic forms is often rendered obstinate by intemperance.

6. All drunkards are liable to SORE EYES. The disease is sometimes of the lids only: at others, of the whole front of the eye-ball, and attended with an offensive discharge.—The young drunkard looks upon this malady with concern. He knows it to be the consequence of his intemperance, and fears that it may betray him to society. To prevent this, he resorts to the aid of *bottle* green glasses; but his sagacity is like that of the owl, which thrusts its head into a cavity of the wall where it is confined;—he blinds his own eyes, but leaves those of his neighbors open to his shame; for by this time, his insobriety is disclosed by many symptoms.

7. Another conspicuous sign of intemperance, is the

fiery eruption on the nose and upper part of the cheeks, which, by a discolouration of language, has been called *Gutta-rosacca*, or *RÔSE-DROP*. Actual drunkenness is not necessary to the production of these pimples; nor, indeed, are they exclusively confined to those who drink. They so seldom, however, appear on any others, that the man on whom they begin to sprout forth, may reasonably be suspected.

8. I have known several drunkards, in middle life, affected with *LEPROSY* (*Lepra Græcorum*). The whole surface of their bodies became red and puckered; the skin cracked open, and a thin acrid matter oozed forth, attended with intolerable itching; finally, immense quantities of scales, resembling those of small fish, were daily formed, and fell off in loathsome showers. I have never known a patient restored from this disgusting malady, while he continued to drink.

9. A much commoner consequence of intemperance, is *WEAKNESS OF THE MUSCULAR SYSTEM, WITH TREMORS*. This condition of the inebriate prevails in the morning; when his strength is that of a child, while his tremors are those of old age. He is unfitted for any employment that requires steadiness of nerve; and when he signs his name to promissory notes, given, perhaps, for debts contracted in consequence of his intemperance, the zig-zag lines betray to all attentive observers, that they will, probably, never be discharged.

10. *EPILEPTIC CONVULSIONS* are a more dreadful effect of his intemperate course. They are by no means uncommon, and often prove fatal; though in many cases, not until they have induced fatuity.

11. *APOPLEXY* is also a drunkard's disease. It occurs in every stage of his melancholy career, but oftencst in old age. It sometimes proves mortal in a single day or hour, or may



terminate in palsy of one side of the body; but the latter malady often precedes the former. Thus the individual, when apparently in health, begins to limp; and, without any obvious cause, gradually loses the use of one leg. Possibly his friends know not the reason; for he may have been a quiet sot, avoiding convivial scenes, and pursuing a regulated course of secret drinking. He resorts to liniments and patent essences; but the seal of death is upon him, and his halting continues to increase, till at length a sudden stroke of apoplexy ends his days, or strikes motionless and senseless one half of his body; in which state he may continue to live for years, and to impose on her whom he had sworn to support, and protect, and cherish, the most disgusting servitude,—rewarding her, under the degrading task, with all the outbreaks of a perverted and vicious temper.

12. Intemperance predisposes the body to SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION. On this point facts have multiplied, until the most incredulous inquirer can scarcely retain his doubts. The bodies of corpulent inebriates, when asleep, have, in several instances, taken fire, by the accidental contact of a coal or candle, and all the soft parts have been reduced to ashes, or driven off in clouds of thick smoke. To conceive of the possibility of this revolting catastrophe, we need only recollect the combustible nature of fat, and the still more inflammable quality of ardent spirits, which is composed of the very same materials; and which, being swallowed, daily, in excessive quantities, with reduction of food, may be presumed to alter, to a certain degree, the chemical composition of the body. Meanwhile its vital powers become greatly reduced, and thus render it an easier prey to fire or other external agents.

13. Lastly. Habitual drinking generates a **BAD HABIT OF BODY**, which renders the individual liable to violent attacks of disease from slight accidents; and causes various disorders to terminate mortally, which might otherwise be cured. Hence the life insurance of a drunkard, in ordinary health, must always be at a higher premium, than that of the temperate—a fact which is doubtless known to the underwriters. I am aware that drunkards boast of escaping many of the epidemic diseases by which the temperate are assailed. But if this happen at any time, it is because the artificial fever is kept up throughout the epidemic. If they relapse into sobriety, they are more liable to attacks than other people; and when assailed, are far likelier to die. The greater mortality of their diseases, is particularly observable in *young men*; of which I might relate several melancholy examples, but a single instance must suffice. A young man, of this city, addicted to habitual and excessive drinking, received a scratch on one of his feet, which, had he been temperate, would have excited but a slight soreness. However, with a constitution enfeebled and perverted, a gangrenous inflammation speedily ensued, and, to the astonishment of those about him, proved fatal within three days!

I leave this unfinished catalogue of bodily ills, to speak of the darker train of mental disorders, engendered by the demon of intemperance. A fit of drunkenness is a paroxysm of delirium—sometimes infuriated, at others mild and idiotic. A drunken man is, always, either dangerous or ridiculous. His senses deceive him, his passions are tempestuous, his judgment overthrown. His actions are senseless and shameless. If good-natured, he is a mawkish and insupportable fool; if ill-tempered, a broilsome and abominable monster; who, in a single hour of uproar and aggres-

sion, assails the circle which surrounds him, insults the delicate, tramples upon the weak, grapples with the strong, and at length escapes from the scene of blood and bustle, partly sobered by the retaliating influence of sound blows. It must be a powerful agent that can raise such a tumult; and its daily operation cannot fail to carry disorder into all the faculties and affections of the soul.

An early effect of habitual drinking is **IRASCIBILITY OF TEMPER.** The patient—for such I must consider him—is easily moved; trifles exasperate him, and when they do not come, he seeks them. You know not how to meet his wants or wishes. He discards even his own precedents, and reverses the decisions of each preceding day. Thus he is inconsistent, capricious, discontented and impetuous,—unhappy himself, and the cause of inquietude to his family and friends. This morbid irritability is the soil from which his passions shoot up, with the energy of the water hemlock and other rank weeds that overrun our valleys. Anger, hatred and jealousy, not measured by the occasions which excite them, contribute to render him contentious and revengeful; or, if the native bent of his disposition was strongly to good nature, he becomes cowardly, whimsical and silly; and inflicts follies on himself and all who come within his reach. Meanwhile his moral principles suffer impairment—his sense of propriety is vitiated—conscience is dethroned—and even respect for public opinion is suspended or forgotten. Thus the whole range of moral sentiments is laid in ruins. But the desolation is not limited to his heart—it extends equally to his head. At an early period his senses begin to experience injury, and at length his powers of perception are perverted, his observations are made inaccurately, his estimate of the truth becomes erroneous, his memory decays, and his judgment is impaired.

In the progress of this intellectual overthrow, his conceptions become disordered, and his imagination excited to an unnatural degree. Strange images arise in his mind, and are believed to be excited by external objects, when, in fact, he is almost insensible to all that surrounds him. He occupies himself solely with the creations of his own distempered fancy, which, by this time, afford him abundant employment, for he is now actually mad. At one hour he converses with friends who are absent—at another, receives mandates from Above, or is enraptured with the sight of imaginary groups of celestial visitants, moving through the air; but in the midst of his bright enchantment, sudden darkness surrounds him, and Satan, with a train of frightful goblins, passes dimly but fearfully before his distempered sight. Terror now arouses him to action; and, if not confined, he courageously encounters real dangers, in attempting to escape from those which are imaginary. But his flight, of course, avails him nothing; for the frightful images cling to him like the poisoned shirt of Hercules. Exhausted, trembling, and delirious, he is at last taken into custody, and compelled to swallow drugs till his illusions are dispelled. He then returns to reason, enfeebled in mind and body—mortified at his own recollections—sunk in the confidence of society, and full of reform. But his passion for drink returns with his strength; and he acts over and over the same ridiculous and melancholy part, till a sudden death, perhaps by his own hand, relieves his family from the heaviest burden that fate could lay upon them.



## CHAPTER VI.

### OF THE DESOLATING EFFECTS OF INTEMPERANCE, ON THE PEACE AND INTERESTS OF SOCIETY.

DAILY observation shows, that in proportion as men become drunken, they cease to be useful to themselves, to their families, and to society. All, therefore, who fall into habits of intoxication, must be lost to the community, if they do not reform. Did the evil stop here, it might be borne; it would then be no worse, than if so many individuals had prematurely died—whose places might be filled up by others. But the ills which the drunkard inflicts on himself, and those associated with him, are far from being merely negative. His intemperance often continues for years, during which the injury to his fortune and family, and the inconvenience to society at large, are oftentimes incredible.

When a common labourer becomes a drunkard, his family is soon reduced to the utmost need. The more he drinks the less he works, and the greater are his expenditures. He soon begins to contract debts, and falls into arrears at every tavern, grocery, and still-house in his neighborhood. Meanwhile, he ceases to contribute any thing to the support of his family, and at length becomes entirely dependent on their industry. But all the exertions of his wife and children are, often, inadequate to the maintenance even of themselves; and the deficiency is made up by purchases on credit. Pay-day too soon arrives, and brings with it the officers of justice, who carry off and sell their scanty stock of household goods. Frost and famine, then, invade the

cabin, or the single rented room, where many of the comforts of a quiet existence once abounded, and the charity of the neighborhood is called forth; but this, in time, becomes exhausted, and the entire family is thrown upon the overseers of the poor, to be supported from the public treasury, at the expense of the industrious and temperate.

If the drunkard be a mechanic, he is either indulgent or tyrannical to his apprentices, whom he makes wayward by his government, and corrupts by his example. He forgets his promises, slights his work, disappoints his customers; apologises with falsehood and, perhaps, recovers their confidence; but subjects them to new disappointments, till, in disgust, they abandon his shop, and he goes to jail.

If a farmer, he becomes a common pest, frequenting all public meetings, which he often disturbs, and inflicting visitations on private families, for the sole purpose of obtaining his favorite beverage. Meantime his farm is neglected and overgrown; his grounds are badly ploughed, and his crops neither planted nor gathered in due season. His fences fall down, and his fields are overrun with domestic animals, who destroy in summer, the provender on which they should subsist in winter. His orchards go unpruned, and degenerate like himself. He wastes his choicest timber, and neglects to plant for those who are to succeed him. His sheds and barracks decay; his slender stock of fodder is rotted by the weather; and his lean and shivering cattle stand exposed to the storm. A neighboring still-house is his market place; and to this are his sons from time to time despatched, to barter a portion of his scanty stores, for that which is to undermine his health, and entail upon them the disgrace of his name, instead of the estate of their ancestors. Well might such a family exclaim with the inspired prophet—



“ Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens.”  
“ We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows.”

If a merchant, a want of system marks all his affairs. His clerks are undisciplined, his customers treated uncivilly, and his accompts inaccurately or negligently kept. He sells without profit that which should have been kept for a better demand, and purchases that which will never sell. He neglects his business in its current operation, and at a moment when his credit would otherwise suffer, throws himself upon the sympathy of his friends for that, which he most probably will never repay. Unsatisfied with the inadequate profits of his badly conducted business, he engages, when excited by drink, in wild speculations, draws the credulous into dangerous responsibilities, and finally beggars his own family by reciprocating the favor.

If a physician, he reads no more; and soon loses much of what he had once leained. He forgets his professional engagements, and disappoints his patients,—to their great irritation, if not actual injury. Instead of acknowledging the truth, he is tempted to offer unfounded excuses, and thus contracts a habit of falsehood. But all this is a trifle, compared with other delinquencies. He does not recollect from one visit to another, the symptoms and treatment of his patients; and, therefore, can prosecute no systematic or rational method of cure. He observes clumsily, scrutinizes no deeper than the surface, forms hasty conclusions, and prescribes at random. Like a blind Cyclops, he inflicts heavy blows, but knows not whether they fall on the disease or the patient. He writes his prescriptions, however, “*secundum artem*,” if not *secundum scientiam*; and, leaving the event with Nature and Providence, seeks for his conscience the quieting influence of another glass.

If a member of the Bar, he is seldom in his office, which he transfers, incessantly, from one part of the city to another, as if in quest of that business which he can attract and secure, only by remaining where he should be found. His places of habitual resort are the coffee house and billiard room; where he wastes the time and intellectual energy which should be appropriated to the service of his clients: thus he is often unprepared for trial; and they, non-suited or badly defended, must either sustain injury, or seek other counsel. He sometimes even visits the forum drunk; misconceives the points under investigation; provokes the sneers of his brethren; insults the court; and beneath its indignant rebuke, sits down or departs, in disgrace if not in silence.

Is he a statesman? the halls of legislation are defiled—A judge? the bench is polluted—A minister of the gospel? the sanctuary is profaned!

Thus we might travel through all the occupations of society, and not find one on which this vice does not exert a withering influence. But it is around the fireside, withdrawn from the rude world, *at home*—the green house of society—amid the blended sweets of family affection, where love, and peace, and joy, should for ever abide, that intemperance displays its gloomiest desolations.

When a son, in early life, contracts a habit of intemperance, his prospects are utterly destroyed. Whether he was designed for the farm, for a trade, or for one of the learned professions, the proud hopes which had supported his father and mother through years of anxiety and toil, give way to disappointment and deep foreboding. In the anguish of their souls, although they watch over him affectionately, they almost wish he were no more; but he generally lives to break the hearts which once beat joyously in the contem-



plation of his pure and simple manners, his budding intellect, and youthful aspirations. Mournful, indeed, is the fate of those parents, who are doomed to see an only son, the natural inheritor of their name and fortune, desert the narrow paths of temperance and virtue, for the broad and beaten track, by which the drunkard descends to infamy and ruin.

But the drunkenness of a son is a small matter, compared with that of a husband and father; for, of all on whom the dreadful effects of this vice can fall, none are so injured as a wife and children:—the wife especially, for whose situation, when the habit is confirmed, there is, in general, no remedy. She is the *great* sufferer; and has just claims on the sympathy of every friend. Being the first to detect the intemperance of her husband, inquietude siezes upon *her* mind, while their friends generally are ignorant and unsuspecting. In a mingled feeling of love and pride, she conceals her painful discovery, even at the expense of candour and her own approbation. She hopes to reform him, and, therefore hides his disgrace; but all her efforts, even when skilfully directed, are too often unavailing. He readily joins her in condemning intemperance; but, in his slight indulgencies, can discover nothing that need alarm her. He can restrain his appetite for drink, and will do so, when it is necessary; but must himself be the judge of that necessity, and, in general, never makes a decision. Meanwhile his propensity increases by indulgence; and at every successive night, it might be said, in the language of a homely but appropriate maxim, that *he is one day older, and two days worse*. The partner of his bosom, now alarmed, essays all her arts to arrest his mad career. She reasons, expostulates, and holds up to his view the scorn of society, and the wrath of heaven: she reminds him of his schemes of early

ambition, and exhorts him to renew the race of wealth or glory: she invokes the spirit of their first love, reviews their wedded life, and presses into her service every tender recollection: she presents to him the future, as he once had pictured it, in colours brighter than those which gild the morning clouds; finally, she surrounds him with his own offspring, and bids him look upon the little ones, whom he is shortly to reduce to penury and disgrace. But, too often, no reformation takes place; and she at length feels that he is lost. She must then prepare for the "days of darkness" which are to come. Long scenes of fatigue, anxiety and varied mortification stretch out before her; she recoils, heart-stricken, from the contemplation, but her path lies through them, and she cannot change its course. Yet she yields to her destiny with reluctance; for woman's lot is cast upon her marriage, and she cannot give up her hopes of domestic happiness, without a struggle. At length their children come to occupy her whole heart; and, for their support and education, she dooms herself to incessant toil, and every privation. Were she alone, her efforts might be successful; but who does not know, that a drunken father is far worse than none? His whole conduct encourages licentiousness, waste, disobedience and disorder among his children and servants; and thus augments, ten-fold, the cares and difficulties of the wife and mother. Thus, the last of the bright expectations of former days is blasted, and her spirit is crushed anew; for she now foresees the probable ruin of her children, as well as her husband. They, in fact, grow up in ignorance, in spite of her utmost efforts; and while some of them cling to her in pity, others fall into vice, or wander off; and all are far different in character and fortune from what she once had reason to expect. Meantime most of the early friends of the family discontinue their

intercourse; and the few who still visit them, but add to her mortification, by witnessing the degraded manners and conversation of her husband. Their little property disappears, piece after piece; and debts are contracted, until both friendship and charity become exhausted. Thus years of bitterness roll away; and she is finally disenthralled by the welcome, though perhaps violent, death of him for whose happiness she would once have yielded up her life.

This long expected event spreads a solemn gratification through society; and the members of his own family can scarcely conceal from themselves, and from each other, how much they are relieved. His old friends re-appear in the funeral procession; but it is to contrast, in under tones, his early with his latter days,—not to bewail his death. The rites of a decent burial being performed, his grave is, generally, ever afterwards neglected by his acquaintances. Should the pride of family erect over it a monument, inscribed with a catalogue of the virtues which he had long ceased to practice, the misrepresentation serves but to preserve the memory of his failings; and those who reared it, are seldom led to its perusal. They even avoid the spot; and no wife and children are seen blending their tears with the first dews of evening upon its tender grass; but thorns and thistles are suffered to spring up with an energy emblematical of his vices, and the serpent makes its home beneath their tangled branches.

## CHAPTER VII.

### OF THE MEANS OF CURING AND PREVENTING INTEMPERANCE.

IN all the stages of his career, if the drunkard refrain from drinking, he of course becomes a sober man; and should no permanent disease have been excited in any organ, he may resume his occupations; and perhaps, return to the place he had filled in society. But, unfortunately, the habit being once established, he will not, I might almost say cannot, refrain. He repents, it is true, but drowns the anguish of his remorse in a fresh libation. His morbid appetite, and the artificial demands of his constitution, are too importunate to be resisted. The flesh triumphs over the spirit; and, as the charmed bird advances, a terrified and trembling victim, into the serpent's mouth, so he returns, full of horror, to the poison, which he knows must at length destroy him. Even in this stage, however, he is, occasionally, cured; either by some alarming event, which carries into his system, both moral and physical, a deep revolution,—or, by the associated action of a nauseating medicine, which disgusts him with intoxicating liquors. But the number thus emancipated is extremely small; and it may admit of a doubt, whether the successful application of a medicinal agent to the cure of drunkenness, would not, on the whole, do more harm than good. Such a medicine, it is true, might save many families from the destruction, which uncured intemperance in the father must eventually bring upon them; but there is some reason to apprehend, that *a confidence in the existence of such a cure* would tend to diminish the fear of indulgence, in those who are beginning

to feel the propensity. Civilians regard the certainty of punishments, as more efficacious than their severity; and, if we open to him, who is commencing a career of drunkenness, the prospect of being cured, at some future time, by the use of medicine, it can scarcely be denied, that a strong inducement for refraining, is abolished.

The true and greatest object is prevention. To this every individual should turn his attention in reference to himself—to this should every wife and sister direct her efforts—to this should all benevolent men dedicate their utmost abilities—and on this should the wisdom and power of our legislative assemblies be exercised. I propose to enumerate some of the modes in which a preventive influence may be exerted; but let us first enquire, for a moment, into the moral nature of intemperance.

It has been ranked with vices and crimes, when it should, rather, have been classed with the bodily disorders which, carrying disturbance into the soul, ultimately lead to their perpetration. This estimate of its character is not at variance with that assigned to it in our Holy Scriptures. The criminality of the drunkard does not consist so much in the outrages which he commits when intoxicated, as in not having governed his appetites, and resisted the establishment in his system of a morbid action, which may destroy the foundations of reason, and poison the fountains of moral feeling. While these remain unpolluted he is a free agent; and is criminal if he do not oppose considerations of duty to the cravings of appetite. He should consider the danger of exposing himself to temptation, and the immorality of an indulgence, which all experience demonstrates, must, finally, overwhelm both soul and body. Yet when he has yielded to the tyranny of a morbid appetite, and become a sot, he should not be treated with cruelty; for that would

neither cure him, nor deter others. On these principles should society rest his case; for upon them, only, can it construct a rational system of prevention.

The principal elements of this system may be distributed into several groups.

#### I. ABOLITIONS.

The daily use, in families, of ardent spirits, whether under the name of bitters, slings, toddies, juleps, punch, or grog, should be discontinued.

The absurd custom of offering them to visitors should be renounced.

The license for drinking establishments, under the denomination of groceries, coffee houses, and confectionaries, should be granted on terms calculated to suppress them, instead of deriving from them, as at present, a revenue that shall diminish our taxes.

The use of whiskey by the engineers, artists and operatives in workshops and manufactories, should be discouraged.

Farmers of wealth and moral influence should agree with each other, not to distribute that liquor among those whom they employ as labourers in harvest time, and on other special occasions, which are most erroneously supposed to require it.

Finally, the practice of drinking ardent spirits at all kinds of public meetings—a practice which interferes as much with the objects for which they are held, as it corrupts the habits of the people at large—should be denounced and abolished.

#### II. SUBSTITUTIONS.

Very great advantage to the cause of temperance would result from substituting several different beverages, of a stimulating quality, for ardent spirits. The inhabitants of



wine countries are generally temperate; and the same remark will apply to those which abound in cider. When cider and spruce beer were the national beverages of New England, her farmers and mechanics were patterns of sobriety. Of the change that has followed, upon the profuse distillation of apple brandy and molasses rum, I shall leave it with her own moralists to speak. Strong beer and porter are preferable to ardent spirits; but their daily use leads to corpulence, apoplexy, and sottishness. Table and family beer and porteree are far healthier, and never intoxicate. They cannot stimulate a stomach seared with the products of the distillery; but to any other they impart as much excitement as comports with sound health. Even lemonade and sherbet are beverages which, on many public occasions, might be substituted for strong drink. In Paris the men of letters, assembled in large evening parties, often refresh themselves with lemonade only, while for hours they sustain the highest grade of intellectual excitation. Of cordials I cannot speak in terms of commendation. They abound in alcohol, rather mixed than chemically combined with other ingredients; and, while the latter entice us into excessive drinking, the former produces almost every mischief that can flow from ardent spirits. But of tea and coffee, as substitutes for alcoholic compounds of every kind, an opinion too favourable could scarcely be expressed. I am not unaware of the injuries which these infusions occasion, especially in females and young men of studious and sedentary habits; but drunkenness is not of the number, nor are all the evils which they produce to be compared with that single vice. That their daily use, particularly the use of tea, contributes to the prevention of intemperance, there cannot be a doubt. I have not often seen a tea drinker become a drunkard; and quite as seldom known a man re-



main temperate, who preferred an evening draught of spirit and water, to that delightful beverage. Of every known stimulus it seems, indeed, to raise in our faculties and feelings the pleasantest animation; and hence its use by so many millions, inhabiting continents the most remote from one another, may be explained, if it cannot be fully approved.

### III. LEGAL DISABILITIES AND PENALTIES.

Our statute laws should be so framed, that drunkenness would bring on those who practice it, several disabilities, the anticipation of which might deter those who are about to yield to temptation.

1. The drunkard should not be eligible to any office in our judicary.

2. When called to serve as a jurymen, either party should have the right of challenge for his failing.

3. When subpoenaed as a witness, the party against whom he is to testify should be permitted to offer proofs to the court and jury, of his habitual intemperance; that they might make the necessary allowances for the mistakes into which he is more liable to fall than sober men.

In all these cases the law would proceed on the fact, that habitual intoxication so disorders our external senses, and impairs our mental faculties, that the observations and conclusions of the drunkard, are at no time to be received without distrust of their accuracy. As a witness he might still remain *competent*, and, as it respects his *disposition* to know and state the truth, even credible; but his *capability* should be questioned, for it is impaired.

In permitting the habitual drunkard to give testimony, without its being shown to the court and jury that he is such, the law seems to me to be deficient in its usual perspicacity. The man who is frequently intoxicated, ceases

at length to be of sound mind; and should be estimated accordingly. When from this cause he falls into manifest derangement, (*Delirium tremens*.) he is no longer competent as a witness; but this state is only the consummation of an intellectual perversion which commenced long before, and, insidiously, deteriorated his powers of perception.

4. The property of the drunkard should be placed in the hands of trustees. If this were done at an early period, it could scarcely fail to contribute to his reformation; and, when it did not succeed, both he and his family might, eventually, be kept from becoming public charges. In some of the states, a law of this kind exists; and it should be adopted by the whole.

#### IV. SOCIAL DISABILITIES AND RESTRICTIONS.

If these were properly and generally imposed, they would contribute signally to the prevention of drunkenness.

No professional man or mechanic should be employed, after he is known to be falling into habits of intemperance.

Boys should not be placed, as students, apprentices or clerks, with intemperate men. This restriction is called for, not less by a regard to the interests of the boy, than the reformation of the inebriate.

Capitalists and master workmen of every kind, should refuse to employ, as operatives or journeymen, all who are given to drunkenness.

Other restrictions of a similar kind might be mentioned, but these will serve as specimens.

#### V. DOMESTIC RESTRICTIONS.

Under this head I would embrace the influence of the sex. If judiciously and earnestly exerted, it would be very great: but I am sorry to say, that in general it is not. Women, both married and single, seldom frown upon intemperance, in its early which are its only curable stages,—

however they may detest its confirmed and loathsome shapes. Every young woman of sense and virtue, instinctively shrinks from the idea of marrying a man of suspected integrity, or of manners, vulgar in comparison to her own; and why should she not take exception to that which is still more portentous? To that which destroys both honor and refinement, and brings in its train such woes, as neither dishonesty nor rudeness can originate? If the parents and daughter would avoid trusting a suitor, who has been once convicted of drunkenness, they would do more to promote the temperance of young men, than all the moralists and declaimers of the age.

The young wife, however, rests under the heaviest responsibility. It is she who has the deepest stake in her husband's habits, and may exercise over them the greatest power. She ought, therefore, to study this subject thoroughly, and take her stand at an early period in a spirit of mild but dauntless resolution. Her motto should be that of the Roman moralist: *Resist the beginnings*. The *custom* may be broken up, but the *habit* is indestructible. Whatever is done, should be done quickly; but it must be done skilfully. It is necessary that she should retain her husband's affection, while she opposes his propensity to intemperance,—a delicate, but in many cases not an impossible task. In proportion as she discovers an increasing necessity for her interference, she should display a deeper affection,—as her object is not to punish, but to preserve. She must render home more and more attractive to him; and seek to establish with him a closer and dearer companionship. She must not withdraw from her female friends; but by every practicable means unite her husband with herself, in the enjoyment of their society; for no man would desire or dare to become a drunkard in the midst of virtuous

women. But while she does all this, and much more, she ought not, even for a single moment, to forget the object in view; nor so speak or act, as to make her husband suppose her indifferent to his failing. She must never, by word or deed, sanction the daily use of morning drams; nor look, as, I am sorry to say, she too often does, with levity, on his first frolicsome indulgencies in company. Under every aspect it can assume; by whatever name it may be called; in spite of all his plausible pretexts, and in the face of the most honorable examples to bear him out, she must frown upon every excess. When he comes home, in season, but inebriated, she should receive him with sadness and reserve; and let him, if he choose, revenge himself by returning to the scene of his dissipation: he will at last make his re-appearance sober. At other times, when he remains away, she should not retire to rest; but, in a feeling of desperation, watch out the longest nights; that he may be touched by the anguish of her spirit, and dismayed by the firmness with which she has resolved to make no compromise with his failing. If no amendment takes place under this simple method, the case is obstinate; and she should prepare for every thing, *but early and silent acquiescence*. It will be due time for this, when all the means within her reach have been employed without avail. Before that state arrives, her activity should be ceaseless, and her efforts directed with all the sagacity she can summon into her service. She must not be discouraged at the inefficacy of one attempt, but pass to another, trying all things, and holding fast to that which is good. Thus rising in her energies with the growth of his vice, and adapting her means, as far as possible, to his peculiarities of temper and disposition, she must, at different times and under vari-

ous circumstances, entreat him with exhortations,—confound him with arguments,—alarm him with consequences,—reproach him with injuries,—overwhelm him with the tears of embittered love! Let her not be alarmed at this advice. She has nothing to fear, and something to hope, from a determined course. Her husband, knowing her to be right, and being conscious that he is wrong, will be compelled to respect her in the midst of his irritation; and, while he might turn with contempt from the sighs of weakness, may cower beneath the remonstrances of indignant love. There is *power* in the stern virtue of a woman's heart; and no husband, not brutal by nature, or from vice, can set at nought her firm resolves in the cause of duty. When pressed to extremity, her re-action has stricken terror into him, who till then never felt alarm. Endowed by her Creator with this peculiar power, the sustaining principle of her sex's dignity, it is her duty to exert it. What! is she a bondwoman, or a beast of burden? Is she to cater for his appetites, and waste her days, in servitude to his stormy passions? Was it for this she departed from the mansion of her ancestors, and relinquished the endearing protection of her father and brothers? Was it for this she stood before the altar, and exchanged vows of fidelity and love? Is she not rather in many respects a co-equal, with rights and dignities not dependent on the will of her husband? If her sphere of action be more limited than his, is she not a free agent within her proper circle, and should she not fearlessly maintain her interests? God has given her a desire for happiness, and the liberty to pursue it, according to certain laws; and should her husband's vices obtrude upon her narrow and rugged way, she must effectually dispel them, or relinquish every hope save that of Heaven.

But great as may be the influence of woman, when timely and courageously exerted, we must not rely on it, alone, to repress or control intemperance. A variety of causes tend to paralyze her efforts, such as ignorance; native timidity; an indifference to remote consequences; the habit of unqualified submission; and, above all, the wide spreading and fatal weakness, of allowing her husband, for a time, to atone for his excesses, by redoubled attentions to herself. It is our duty, as men, to look to ourselves, and to each other. The practices which, reciprocally, corrupt our lives should be abolished; and in their stead we should adopt those which refine our manners and purify our hearts. We should follow in reference to vice the economical maxims, by which we guard against losses by fire and flood. We form mutual insurance companies, for our property,—why not for the virtues by which that property is to be earned and held. An estate is soon lost, if not guarded by temperance and its associates—industry and economy; and when lost by drunkenness, it is gone for ever. It is melancholy to witness the folly of poor, inconsistent man: to look at his long policies of insurance against the torch of the incendiary; when his property at that very hour belongs of right to other men, who have administered to his intemperance, or profited by the stupidity which it generates. Let us, then, awaken from the sleep of indifference, and open our eyes to the nature and effects of that vice, which, above every other, brings distress upon the land. There are several causes which contribute either to diminish our aversion to it, or to quiet our consciences under the neglect of the proper means for its suppression.

1. We are accustomed to witness it from infancy, and are, therefore, the less offended by its obscenities; while we



grow up with a faint impression, that it is a necessary, or at least an inevitable evil in society.

2. It connects itself with the private lives and domestic habits of the individuals who practise it; and is thus supposed, by many, not to be an admissible object of public censure. But this is an error which ought to be exploded. If the drunkard, sooner or later, require the interposition or the guardianship of society—and this he may do—society has the *right*, if it can devise the means, to *prevent* his drunkenness. He becomes delirious, and requires confinement; he abuses or assaults his family, who must seek the protection of friends, or of the laws; he wastes his estate, and throws both himself and children on the bounty of the commonwealth. These are but a part of the evils which he inflicts upon the state; and still they are enough to make him a fit subject of both social and political legislation.

3. No vice in general makes a more clandestine progress. In a few cases it is clamorous, but then comparatively harmless—its deadliest forms are silent, and give little alarm. Its march is unobserved; for it comes not with drums and trumpets, but steals upon society like an armed man under cover of the night, and frequently is not discovered, till after resistance is of no avail.

4. Many worthy men are deterred from interfering, by their want of moral courage. They fear the sarcasms of the drunkard and his dissolute associates. They alarm themselves and each other, with possible consequences; and while they would delight to witness the reform even of a single inebriate, they are unwilling to risk a solitary effort to accomplish it. They are frightened by the magnitude of the duty, into its total dereliction. It would, perhaps, be wrong to press such persons into the army of reformation;



for Nature has given them a commission of neutrality, and her power should be respected.

5. But the great cause of our remissness lies in the excessive energy of the selfish principle. Its power is sometimes almost magical; for, like an inverted telescope, it presents to us the evils of all other persons in reduced dimensions, and enables us to bear them with the most admirable fortitude. The man of inordinate selfishness is never able to find in the community a single evil, which *duty* calls upon him to correct. The sufferings of other people cannot pierce the coat of mail in which his heart is encased. His partnership with society is not one of profit and loss; but of clear gain, if he can make it so. When dividends are to be declared, he is a large stockholder; but if disasters are to be met, or deficiencies supplied, he is no longer a member of the firm. He looks upon society as something created for his use; and delights in its prosperity, whenever that prosperity will contribute to his benefit; while he deplores the miseries of others, as far as they may detract from his own interests and enjoyments, and no further. By the most touching events connected with others his heart is not warmed to the core, and the tender charities which begin to sprout up, soon perish by the frost within. So, the utmost power of the sun, thaws but the surface of the shores around Hudson's Bay; and the young plants, which the famishing adventurer would cultivate, are speedily chilled by the ice beneath. It is edifying to observe his conduct in particular situations. Thus, at the dead hour of night, when the city is alarmed by the cry of fire, and every noble spirit, whether rich or poor, instinctively hurries to the spot; when the sounds of dismay and lamentation reach the deep recesses of every generous heart, and even the tear of pity starts in many an eye, the selfish man repairs to his

chamber window, to observe the course of the wind! If the lurid flames are driven towards his own estates, they melt his heart into the deepest sympathy. He then becomes sorely afflicted for the losses of his suffering neighbors, and brings to their relief his mightiest efforts; but let him feel secure from the evil, and he gazes at the conflagration like a second Nero!

From such men, the philanthropist need expect no aid in his schemes of charity; but this should not discourage him,—for a daring minority, in the cause of virtue, will make itself felt and feared. Ardor and union must produce important results, in spite of all opposition. The true corrective of intemperance is public sentiment; which should be every where embodied and directed with skill and intrepid perseverance.

Let the habitual use of ardent spirits be discountenanced both by example and precept:—let drunkenness, in all its grades and varieties, be declared infamous:—make it an offence against the laws of society, as it is against the laws of Nature and of God:—spurn it with contempt:—display the list of its murders:—proclaim its guilt to the world; and pronounce upon it a sentence of perpetual banishment.

Thus shall the “pestilence that walketh in darkness” be stayed in its onward course,—the imprudent warned in time of the danger which surrounds them,—and a vast multitude be preserved from the ravages of its destroying power.

# APPENDIX.

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## No. I.

### ALCOHOL.

ALCOHOL, according to Saussure, is composed of carbon, oxygen and hydrogen, in the following proportions—C. 51.98, O. 34.32, H. 13.70=100. Its specific gravity is 791, water being 1000; but it can with difficulty be obtained so pure, and its more common specific gravity is 820. It was once supposed, that alcohol was formed in the process of *distillation*; but Mr. Brande has demonstrated that it is, exclusively, the product of *fermentation*,—and, therefore, that it exists in every saccharine or sugary solution, which has undergone fermentation. Sugar is, indeed, the indispensable material out of which alcohol is formed; and it is melancholy to reflect on the misapplication of art, in converting one of the most pleasant, harmless and nourishing substances in nature, into a bewitching poison.

The following table, compiled from Brande's Manual of Chemistry, shows the proportion in which alcohol exists in several different beverages:

#### DISTILLED SPIRITS.

Scotch whiskey, 54.32 parts by measure in 100,		
Irish	ditto, 53.90	ditto,
Rum,	53.68	ditto,
Brandy,	53.39	ditto,
Gin,	51.60	ditto.

## WINES.

22.96 parts by measure in 100.		
Port,	22.96	
Madeira,	22.27	ditto,
Currant,	20.55	ditto,
Teneriffe,	19.79	ditto,
Sherry,	19.17	ditto,
Lisbon and Malaga, each,	18.94	ditto,
Claret,	15.10	ditto,
Champaign,	13.80	ditto,
Gooseberry,	11.84	ditto,
Elder,	8.79	ditto.

## MALT LIQUORS.

Ale,	6.87	ditto,
Brown stout,	6.80	ditto,
London porter,	4.20	ditto,
London small-beer,	1.28	ditto.

## CIDER.

Highest average,	9.87	ditto,
Lowest average,	5.21	ditto.

From this table it appears, that in brandy, rum and whiskey, there is, by measure, more alcohol than water; that Madeira and port wines contain nearly half, strong cider about a fifth, and ale an eighth, as much as they. Thus, a bottle of Madeira has in it nearly a pint of proof spirit; a quart of strong cider more than six ounces; and a bottle of ale about four ounces.

The chemists were surprized at the results of Mr. Brande's experiments. Nobody, till then, was aware, that the various fermented liquors contain so large a quantity of alcohol. Their intoxicating effects are certainly not in proportion. This arises from their other ingredients; which give to all of them a nourishing quality, and to each, effects more or less peculiar. Thus says Dr. Paris:

"Alcohol, although diluted to the degree of proof spirit, is still too strong for internal exhibition; indeed, where its use is

indicated, it is more generally given in the form of wine, malt liquors, or ardent spirits, which must be regarded only as alcohol, although each has a peculiarity of operation, owing to the modifying influence of the other elements of the liquid; thus *brandy* is said to be simply cordial and stomachic; *rum*, heating and sudorific; *gin* and *whiskey*, diuretic; and *arrack*, styptic, heating, and narcotic; it seems also probable that a modified effect is produced by the addition of various other substances, such as sugar and acids, which latter bodies, besides their anti-narcotic powers, appear to act by favoring a more perfect combination and mutual penetration of the particles of spirit and water. The effects also which are produced by the habitual use of fermented liquors, differ essentially, according to the kind that is drank; thus ale and porter, in consequence of the nutritive matter, and perhaps the invigorating bitter with which they are charged, and the comparatively small proportion of alcohol, dispose to a plethora, which is not unfrequently terminated by apoplexy; spirits, on the other hand, induce severe dyspepsia, obstructed and hardened liver, dropsy, and more than half of all our chronical diseases; and Dr. Darwin moreover remarks, that when they arise from this cause, they are liable to become hereditary, even to the third generation, gradually increasing, if the cause be continued, till the family becomes extinct: with regard to wine, Rush has truly observed that its effects, like those of tyranny in a well formed government, are first felt in the extremities, while spirits, like a bold invader, seize at once upon the vitals of the constitution; the different kinds of wine, however, produce very different and even opposite effects."—*Pharmacologia*, pp. 577-8.

This view of the effects of different kinds of alcoholic beverages, suggests to us the propriety of nice discrimination, when we are about to choose one of them as a medicine. On the subject of their relative differences, both physicians and the people, are less informed than they ought to be; and mistakes are, therefore, by no means uncommon.

In their praiseworthy zeal for the suppression of intemperance, many persons have proposed the enactment of a

law, prohibiting the distillation of aleohol. But such a law would not be compatible with the genius of a free government, and could never be successfully enforced. Aleohol, moreover, is an agent of extensive and varied utility,—and could not, therefore, be dispensed with. In analytical chemistry, it has contributed much to a correct knowledge of the composition of bodies; especially those belonging to the vegetable kingdom. In the arts it performs a service equally important, being the only solvent for a great number of substances; which, in civilized life, are highly useful if dissolved in alcohol, but otherwise useless. Lastly, in Medicine its uses are equally important; as it extracts the active principles from a number of compounds, and imparts to them increased energy as tonics and stimulants.

If, however, it were practicable and proper to suppress the distillation of alcohol, but little would perhaps be gained by doing so. An increased manufacture and consumption of fermented liquors would no doubt ensue; or opium might be introduced, as a substitute, the effects of which would not be less dreadful than those of ardent spirits. Distillation, therefore, must be tolerated; but it should be taxed. This would diminish the quantity of its products, and raise their price to the consumer; which would infallibly diminish their consumption. It is said, however, that the people will not submit to an excise. If this be the fact, it argues but little in favor of their temperance, or their regard for the interests of morality. The people may not submit to an excise unaccompanied by an increased duty on foreign spirits and wines; but with such a duty,—which would keep the rich and the poor in the same *relative* condition, by augmenting equally to all the expense of drinking,—an excise would probably be borne, and could not fail to produce salutary effects.



## No. II.

### COMBUSTION OF THE HUMAN BODY,

*Produced by the long and immoderate use of Spiritous Liquors.*

BY PIERRE-AIME LAIR.\*

IN natural as well as civil history, there are facts presented to the meditation of the observer, which, though confirmed by the most convincing testimony, seem on the first view to be destitute of probability. Of this kind is that of people consumed by coming into contact with common fire, and of their bodies being reduced to ashes. How can we conceive that fire, under certain circumstances, can exercise so powerful an action on the human body as to produce this effect? One might be induced to give less faith to these instances of combustion, as they seem to be rare. I confess, that at first they appeared to me worthy of very little credit; but they are presented to the public, as true, by men whose veracity seems unquestionable. Bianchini, Maffei, Le Cat, Vieq-d'Azyr, and several men distinguished by their learning, have given certain testimony of the facts. Besides, is it more surprising to experience such incineration than to void saccharine urine, or to see the bones softened to such a degree as to be reduced to the state of a jelly? The effects of this combustion are certainly not more wonderful than those of the bones softened, or of the diabetes mellitus. This morbid disposition, therefore, would be one more scourge to afflict hu-

\* This paper was translated from the *Journal de Physique*, of Paris, for the year 1800, and published in the sixth volume of *Tilloch's Philosophical Magazine*, London; whence it was transferred, by Professor Coxe, to the first volume of the *Emporium of Arts and Sciences*. As the facts which it contains are curious, and, in the Western country, will be new to most readers, I have thought it better to reprint the whole, than to make an abridgment of it, or to present a new compilation of the same materials.



manity ; but in physics, facts being always preferable to reasoning, I shall here collect those which appear to me to bear the impression of truth ; and, lest I should alter the sense, I shall quote them such as they are given in the works from which I have extracted them.

We read in the Transactions of Copenhagen, that in 1692, a woman of the lower class, who for three years had used spirituous liquors to such excess that she would take no other nourishment, having sat down one evening on a straw chair to sleep, was consumed in the night time, so that next morning no part of her was found but the skull and the extremities of the fingers ; all the rest of her body, says Jacobæus, was reduced to ashes.

The following extract of the memoir of Bianchini is taken from the Annual Register for 1763 :—The Countess Cornelia Bandi, of the town of Cesena, aged 62, enjoyed a good state of health. One evening, having experienced a sort of drowsiness, she retired to bed, and her maid remained with her till she fell asleep. Next morning, when the girl entered to awaken her mistress, she found nothing but the remains of her body in the most horrid condition. At the distance of four feet from the bed was a heap of ashes, in which could be distinguished the legs and arms untouched. Between the legs lay the head, the brain of which, together with half the posterior parts of the cranium, and the whole chin, had been consumed : three fingers were found in the state of a coal ; the rest of the body was reduced to ashes, which, when touched, left on the fingers a fat, fetid moisture. A small lamp which stood on the floor was covered with ashes, and contained no oil ; the tallow of two candles was melted on the table, but the wicks still remained, and the feet of the candlesticks were covered with a certain moisture. The bed was not damaged ; the bed clothes and coverlid were raised up and thrown on one side, as is the case when a person gets up. The furniture and tapestry were covered with a moist kind of soot of the color of ashes, which had penetrated into the drawers and dirtied the linen. The soot having been conveyed to a neighboring kitchen, adhered to the walls and the utensils. A piece of bread in the cupboard was covered with it, and no dog would touch it. The infectious odor had been communi-

cated to other apartments. The Annual Register states, that the Countess of Cescna was accustomed to bathe all her body in camphorated spirit of wine. Bianchini caused the details of this deplorable event to be published at the time when it took place, and no one contradicted them. It was attested also by Scipio Maffei, a learned cotemporary of Bianchini, who was far from being credulous; and, in the last place, this surprising fact was confirmed to the Royal Society of London by Paul Rolli. The Annual Register mentions also two other facts of the same kind, which occurred in England—one at Southampton and the other at Coventry.

An instance of the like kind is preserved in the same work,\* in a letter to Mr. Wilmer, surgeon:—"Mary Clues, aged 50, was much addicted to intoxication. Her propensity to this vice had increased after the death of her husband, which happened a year and a half before. For about a year, scarcely a day had passed in the course of which she did not drink at least half a pint of rum or aniseed-water. Her health gradually declined; and about the beginning of February she was attacked by the jaundice, and confined to her bed. Though she was incapable of much action, and not in a condition to work, she still continued her old habit of drinking every day and smoking a pipe of tobacco. The bed in which she lay stood parallel to the chimney of the apartment, and at the distance from it of about three feet. On Saturday morning, the 1st of March, she fell on the floor; and her extreme weakness having prevented her from getting up, she remained in that state till some one entered and put her to bed. The following night she wished to be left alone. A woman quitted her at half past eleven, and, according to custom, shut the door and locked it. She had put on the fire two large pieces of coal, and placed a light in a candlestick on a chair at the head of her bed. At half past five in the morning, a smoke was seen issuing through the window; and the door being speedily broke open, some flames which were in the room were soon extinguished. Between the bed and the chimney were found the remains of the unfortunate Clues. One leg and a thigh were still entire; but there remained nothing of the

\* Annual Register for 1773, p. 78.

skin, the muscles, and the viscera. The bones of the cranium, the breast, the spine, and the upper extremities, were entirely calcined, and covered with a whitish efflorescence. The people were much surprised that the furniture had sustained so little injury. The side of the bed which was next to the chimney had suffered the most; but the feather bed, the clothes, and covering, were safe. I entered the apartment about two hours after it had been opened, and observed that the walls and every thing in it were blackened; that it was filled with a very disagreeable vapor; but that nothing except the body exhibited any strong traces of fire."

This instance has great similarity to that related by Vieq-d'Azyr, in the *Encyclopedie Methodique*, under the head, Pathologic Anatomy of Man. A woman, about fifty years of age, who indulged to excess in spiritous liquors, and got drunk every day before she went to bed, was found entirely burnt, and reduced to ashes. Some of the osseous parts only were left; but the furniture of the apartment had suffered very little damage. Vieq-d'Azyr, instead of disbelieving this phenomenon, adds, that there have been other instances of a like kind.

We find also a circumstance of this kind, in a work entitled *Acta Medica et Philosophica Hafniensia*; and in the work of Henry Bohanser, entitled *Le Nouveau Phosphore Enflamme*. A woman at Paris, who had been accustomed, for three years, to drink spirit of wine to such a degree that she used no other liquor, was one day found entirely reduced to ashes, except the skull and extremities of the fingers.

The Transactions of the Royal Society of London present also an instance of human combustion no less extraordinary. It was mentioned at the time it happened in all the journals; it was then attested by a great number of eye-witnesses, and became the subject of many learned discussions. Three accounts of this event, by different authors, all nearly coincide. The fact is related as follows:—"Grace, the wife of a fishmonger of the parish of St. Clement, Ipswich, aged about sixty, had contracted a habit, which she continued for several years, of coming down every night from her bed room, half dressed, to smoke a pipe. On the night of the 9th of April, 1744, she got up from bed as usual. Her daughter, who slept with her, did not per-

ceive she was absent till next morning when she awoke,—soon after which she put on her clothes, and going down to the kitchen, found her mother stretched out on the right side, with her head near the grate; the body extended on the hearth, with the legs on the floor, which was of deal, having the appearance of a log of wood, consumed by a fire without apparent flame. On beholding this spectacle, the girl ran in great haste, and poured over her mother's body some water contained in two large vessels, in order to extinguish the fire; while the fœtid odor and smoke, which exhaled from the body, almost suffocated some of the neighbors who had hastened to the girl's assistance. The trunk was in some measure incinerated, and resembled a heap of coals covered with white ashes. The head, the arms, the legs, and the thighs, had also participated in the burning. This woman, it is said, had drunk a large quantity of spiritous liquor, in consequence of being overjoyed to hear that one of her daughters had returned from Gibraltar. There was no fire in the grate, and the candle had burnt entirely out in the socket of the candlestick, which was close to her. Besides, there were found near the consumed body the clothes of a child, and a paper screen, which had sustained no injury by the fire. The dress of this woman consisted of a cotton gown."

Le Cat, in a memoir on spontaneous burning, mentions several other instances of combustion of the human body.—"Having," says he, "spent several months at Rheims, in the years 1724 and 1725, I lodged at the house of Sieur Millet, whose wife got intoxicated every day. The domestic economy of the family was managed by a pretty young girl, which I must not omit to remark, in order that all the circumstances which accompanied the fact I am about to relate, may be better understood. This woman was found consumed, on the 20th of February, 1725, at the distance of a foot and a half from the hearth in her kitchen. A part of the head only, with a portion of the lower extremities and a few of the vertebræ, had escaped combustion. A foot and a half of the flooring under the body had been consumed; but a kneading trough and a powdering tub, which were very near the body, had sustained no injury. M. Chretien, a surgeon, examined the remains of the body with every juridical formality. Jean Millet, the husband, being in-

terrogated by the judges who instituted an inquiry into the affair, declared, that about eight in the evening, on the 19th of February, he had retired to rest with his wife, who, not being able to sleep, had gone into the kitchen, where he thought she was warming herself; that, having fallen asleep, he was awakened about two o'clock by an infectious odor; and that, having run to the kitchen, he found the remains of his wife in the state described in the report of the physicians and surgeons. The judges, having no suspicion of the real cause of this event, prosecuted the affair with the utmost diligence. It was very unfortunate for Millot that he had a handsome servant maid; for neither his probity nor innocence was able to save him from the suspicion of having got rid of his wife by a concerted plot, and having arranged the rest of the circumstance in such a manner as to give it the appearance of an accident. He experienced, therefore, the whole severity of the law; and though, by an appeal to a superior and very enlightened court, which discovered the cause of the combustion, he came off victorious, he suffered so much from uneasiness of mind, that he was obliged to pass the remainder of his melancholy days in a hospital."

Le Cat relates another instance, which has a most perfect resemblance to the preceding:—"M. Boinneau, Curé of Plerguor, near Dol," says he, "wrote to me the following letter, dated February 22, 1749: Allow me to communicate to you a fact, which took place here about a fortnight ago. Madame de Boiseon, eighty years of age, exceedingly meagre, who had drunk nothing but spirits for several years, was sitting in her elbow chair before the fire, while her waiting maid went out of the room for a few moments. On her return, seeing her mistress on fire, she immediately gave an alarm, and some people having come to her assistance, one of them endeavored to extinguish the flames with his hand; but they adhered to it as if it had been dipped in brandy or oil on fire. Water was brought and thrown on the lady in abundance; yet the fire appeared more violent, and was not extinguished till the whole flesh had been consumed. Her skeleton, exceedingly black, remained entire in the chair, which was only a little scorched; one leg only, and the two hands, detached themselves from the rest of the bones. It is not known whether her clothes had caught fire



by approaching the grate. The lady was in the same place in which she sat every day; there was no extraordinary fire, and she had not fallen. What makes me suspect that the use of spirits might have produced this effect is, that I have been assured, that at the gate of Dinan an accident of the like kind happened to another woman under similar circumstances."

To these instances, which I have multiplied to strengthen the evidence, I shall add two other facts of the same kind, published in the *Journal de Medicine*.\* The first took place at Aix, in Provence; and is thus related by Muraire, a surgeon:—"In the month of February, 1779, Mary Jauffret, widow of Nicholas Gravier, shoemaker, of a small size, exceedingly corpulent, and addicted to drinking, having been burnt in her apartment, M. Rocas, my colleague, who was commissioned to make a report respecting the remains of her body, found only a mass of ashes, and a few bones, calcined in such a manner that on the least pressure they were reduced to dust. The bones of the cranium, one hand, and a foot, had in part escaped the action of the fire. Near these remains stood a table untouched, and under the table a small wooden stove, the grating of which, having been long burnt, afforded an aperture, through which, it is probable, the fire that occasioned the melancholy accident had been communicated: one chair, which stood too near the flames, had the seat and fore feet burnt. In other respects, there was no appearance of fire either in the chimney or the apartment; so that, except the fore part of the chair, it appears to me that no other combustible matter contributed to this speedy incineration, which was effected in the space of seven or eight hours."

The other instance, mentioned in the *Journal de Medicine*,† took place at Caen, and is thus related by Merille, a surgeon of that city, still alive:—"Being requested, on the 3d of June, 1782, by the king's officers, to draw up a report of the state in which I found Mademoiselle Muars, who was said to have been burnt, I made the following observations: The body lay with the crown of the head resting against one of the andirons, at the distance of eighteen inches from the fire; the remainder of the body was placed obliquely before the chimney, the whole

\* Vol. 59. p. 440.

† Vol 59. p. 140

being nothing but a mass of ashes. Even the most solid bones had lost their form and consistence; none of them could be distinguished except the coronal, the two parietal bones, the two lumbar vertebræ, a portion of the tibia, and a part of the omoplate; and these, even, were so calcined, that they became dust by the least pressure. The right foot was found entire, and scorched at its upper junction; the left was more burnt. The day had been cold; but there was nothing in the grate except two or three bits of wood, about an inch in diameter, burnt in the middle. None of the furniture in the apartment was damaged. The chair on which Mademoiselle Thuars had been sitting, was found at the distance of a foot from her, and absolutely untouched. I must here observe, that this lady was exceedingly corpulent; that she was above sixty years of age, and much addicted to spiritous liquors; that the day even of her death, she had drunk three bottles of wine and about a bottle of brandy; and that the consumption of the body had taken place in less than seven hours, though, according to appearance, nothing around the body was burnt but the clothes."

The town of Caen affords several other instances of the same kind. I have been told by many people, and particularly a physician of Argentan, named Bouët, author of an Essay on Intermittent Fevers, that a woman of the lower class, who lived at *Place Villars*, and who was known to be much addicted to strong liquor, had been found in her house, burnt. The extremities of her body only were spared; but the furniture was very little damaged.

A like unfortunate accident happened also at Caen to another old woman addicted to drinking. I was assured by those who told me the fact, that the flames which proceeded from the body could not be extinguished by water; but I think it needless to relate the particulars of this, and of another similar event, which took place in the same town, — because, as they were not attested by a *proces verbal*, and not having been communicated by professional men, they do not inspire the same confidence.

This collection of instances is supported, therefore, by all those authentic proofs which can be required to form human testimony; for, while we admit the prudent doubt of Descartes, we ought to reject the universal doubt of the Pyrrhonists. The



multiplicity and uniformity even of these facts, which occurred in different places, and were attested by so many enlightened men, carry with them conviction; they have such a relation to each other, that we are inclined to ascribe them to the same cause.

1. The persons who experienced the effects of this combustion had for a long time made an immoderate use of spiritous liquors.

2. The combustion took place only in women.

3. These women were far advanced in life.

4. Their bodies did not take fire spontaneously, but were burnt by accident.

5. The extremities, such as the feet and the hands, were generally spared by the fire.

6. Water sometimes, instead of extinguishing the flames which proceeded from the parts on fire, gave them more activity.

7. The fire did very little damage, and often even spared the combustible objects which were in contact with the human body at the moment when it was burning.

8. The combustion of these bodies left as a residuum fat fetid ashes, with an unctuous, stinking, and very penetrating soot.

Let us now enter into an examination of these eight general observations.

The first idea which occurs, on reading the numerous instances of human combustion above related, is, that those who fell victims to those fatal accidents were almost all addicted to spiritous liquors. The woman mentioned in the Transactions of Copenhagen had for three years made such an immoderate use of them, that she would take no other nourishment. Mary Clues, for a year before the accident happened, had scarcely been a single day without drinking half a pint of rum or of aniseed-water. The wife of Millet had been continually intoxicated; Madame de Boiseon for several years had drunk nothing but spirits; Mary Jauffert was much addicted to drinking; and Mademoiselle Thuars, and the other women of Caen, were equally fond of strong liquors.

Such excess, in regard to the use of spiritous liquors, must have had a powerful action on the bodies of the persons to whom I allude. All their fluids and solids must have experienced its

fatal influence ; for the property of the absorbing vessels, which is so active in the human body, seems on this occasion to have acted a distinguished part. It has been observed, that the urine of great drinkers is generally aqueous and limpid. It appears, that in drunkards who make an immoderate use of spiritous liquors, the aqueous part of their drink is discharged by the urinary passage ; while the alcoholic, almost like the volatile part of aromatic substances, not being subjected to an entire decomposition, is absorbed into every part of their bodies.

I shall now proceed to the second general observation, that the combustion took place only in women.

I will not pretend to assert that men are not liable to combustion in the same manner, but I have never yet been able to find one well certified instance of such an event ; and as we cannot proceed with any certainty but on the authority of facts, I think this singularity so surprising as to give rise to a few reflections. Perhaps when the cause is examined, it will appear perfectly natural. The female body is in general more delicate than that of the other sex. The system of their solids is more relaxed ; their fibres are more fragile and of a weaker structure, and therefore their texture more easily hurt. Their mode of life also contributes to increase the weakness of their organization. Women, abandoned in general to a sedentary life, charged with the care of the internal domestic economy, and often shut up in close apartments, where they are condemned to spend whole days without taking any exercise, are more subject than men to become corpulent. The texture of the soft parts in female bodies being more spongy, absorption ought to be freer ; and as their whole bodies imbibe spiritous liquors with more ease, they ought to experience more readily the impression of fire. Hence that combustion, the melancholy instances of which seem to be furnished by women alone ; and it is owing merely to the want of a certain concurrence of circumstances and of physical causes, that these events, though less rare than is supposed, do not become more common.

The second general observation serves to explain the third ; I mean, that combustion took place only in women far advanced in life. The Countess of Cesena was sixty-two years of age ; Mary Clues, fifty-two ; Grace Pitt, sixty ; Madame de Boiseon,

eighty; and Mademoiselle Thuars more than sixty. These examples prove that combustion is more frequent among old women. Young persons, distracted by other passions, are not much addicted to drinking; but when love, departing along with youth, leaves a vacuum in the mind, if its place be not supplied by ambition or interest, a taste for gaming, or religious fervor, it generally falls a prey to intoxication. This passion still increases as the others diminish, especially in women, who can indulge it without restraint. Wilmer, therefore, observes, "that the propensity of Mary Clues to this vice had always increased after the death of her husband, which happened about a year before." Almost all the other women of whom I have spoken, being equally unconfined in regard to their actions, could gratify their attachment to spiritous liquors without opposition.

It may have been observed, that the obesity of women, as they advance in life, renders them more sedentary; and if, as has been remarked by Baumes,\* a sedentary life overcharges the body with hydrogen, this effect must be still more sensible among old women. Dancing and walking, which form salutary recreation for young persons, are at a certain age interdicted as much by nature as by prejudice. It needs, therefore, excite no astonishment, that old women, who are in general more corpulent and more addicted to drinking, and who are often motionless like inanimate masses, during the moment of intoxication, should experience the effects of combustion.

Perhaps we have no occasion to go very far to search for the cause of these combustions. The fire of the wooden stove, the chimney, or of the candle, might have been communicated to the clothes, and might have in this manner burnt the persons above mentioned, on account of the peculiar disposition of their bodies. Maffei observes, that the Countess of Cesena was accustomed to bathe her whole body with spirit of wine. The vicinity of the candle and lamp, which were found near the remains of her body, occasioned, without doubt, the combustion. This accident reminds us of that which happened to Charles II, king of Navarre. This prince, being addicted to drunkenness and excesses of every kind, had caused himself to be wrapped up in

\* *Essai du Systeme Chimique de la Science de l'Homme.*

cloths which had been dipped in spirits, in order to revive the natural heat of his body, which had been weakened by debauchery; but the cloths caught fire while his attendants were fastening them, and he perished a victim to his imprudence.

Besides accidental combustion, it remains for us to examine whether spontaneous combustion of the human body can take place, as asserted by Le Cat. Spontaneous combustion is the burning of the human body without the contact of any substance in a state of ignition. Nature, indeed, affords several instances of spontaneous combustion in the mineral and vegetable kingdoms. The decomposition of pyrites, and the subterranean processes which are carried on in volcanoes, afford proofs of it. Coal mines may readily take fire spontaneously; and this has been found to be the case with heaps of coals deposited in close places. It is by a fermentation of this kind that dung-hills sometimes become hot, and take fire. This may serve also to explain why trusses of hay, carried home during moist weather, and piled up on each other, sometimes take fire. But, can spontaneous combustion take place in the human body? If some authors are to be credited,\* very violent combustion may be produced in our bodies by nature and by artificial processes. Sturmius† says, that in the northern countries, flames often burst from the stomach of persons in a state of intoxication. Three noblemen of Courland having laid a bet which of them could drink the most spirits, two of them died in consequence of suffocation by the flames which issued with great violence from their stomachs. We are told by Thomas Bartholin,‡ on the authority of Vorstius, that a soldier, who had drunk two glasses of spirits, died after an eruption of flames from his mouth. In his third century, Bartholin mentions another accident of the same kind, after a drinking match of strong liquor.

It now remains to decide, from those instances, respecting the accidental or spontaneous causes which produce combustion. Nature, by assuming a thousand different forms, seems at first as if desirous to elude our observation; but, on mature reflection, if it be found easy to prove accidental combustion, sponta-

\* German Ephemerides, Ob. 77.

† Ibid. Tenth year. p. 55.

‡ First century.

uous combustion appears altogether improbable ; for, even admitting the instances of people suffocated by flames, which issued from their mouths, this is still far from the combustion of the whole body. There is a great difference between this semi-combustion and spontaneous combustion so complete as to reduce the bodies to ashes, as in the cases above mentioned. As the human body has never been seen to experience total combustion, these assertions seem rather the production of a fervid imagination than of real observation ; and it too often happens that nature, in her mode of action, does not adopt our manner of seeing.

I shall not extend further these observations on the combustion of the human body, as I flatter myself, that after this examination, every person must be struck with the relation which exists between the cause of this phenomenon and the effects that ensue. A system embellished with imaginary charms is often seducing, but it never presents a perfect whole. We have seen facts justify reasoning, and reasoning serve afterwards to explain facts. The combustion of the human body, which on the first view appears to have in it something of the marvellous, when explained, exhibits nothing but the utmost simplicity : so true it is, that the wonderful is often produced by effects which, as they rarely strike our eyes, permit our minds so much the less to discover their real cause.

Some people, however, may ascribe to the wickedness of mankind what we ascribe to accident. It may be said, that assassins, after putting to death their unfortunate victims, rubbed over their bodies with combustible substances, by which they were consumed. But even if such an idea should ever be conceived, it would be impossible to carry it into execution. Formerly, when criminals were condemned to the flames, what a quantity of combustible substances were necessary to burn their bodies ! A baker's boy, named Renaud, being condemned to be burnt a few years ago at Caen, two large cart loads of faggots were required to consume the body ; and at the end of more than ten hours, some remains of the bones were still to be seen. What proves that the combustion in the before mentioned instances was not artificial, is, that people often arrived at the moment when it had taken place, and that the body was found in its natural

state. People entered the house of Madame de Boiseon at the time her body was on fire; and all the neighbors saw it. Besides, the people of whom I have spoken were almost all of the lowest class, and not much calculated to give rise to the commission of such a crime. The woman mentioned in the Transactions of Copenhagen, was of the poorest condition; Grace Pitt was the wife of a fishmonger; Mary Jausfret that of a shoemaker; and two other women, who resided at Caen, belonged to the lowest order of society. It is incontestible, then, that in the instances I have adduced, the combustion was always accidental, and never intentional.

It may be seen, that a knowledge of the causes of this phenomenon is no less interesting to criminal justice than to natural history; for unjust suspicions may sometimes fall on an innocent man. Who will not shudder on recollecting the case of the unfortunate inhabitant of Rheims, who, after having lost his wife by the effect of combustion, was in danger of perishing himself on the scaffold, condemned unjustly by an ignorant tribunal!

I shall consider myself happy, if this picture of the fatal effects of intoxication makes an impression on those addicted to this vice,—and particularly on women, who most frequently become the victims of it. Perhaps the frightful details of so horrid an evil as that of combustion, will reclaim drunkards from this horrid practice. Plutarch relates, that at Sparta, children were deterred from drunkenness by exhibiting to them the spectacle of intoxicated slaves, who, by their hideous contortions, filled the minds of these young spectators with so much contempt, that they never afterwards got drunk. This state of drunkenness, however, was only transitory. How much more horrid it appears, in these unfortunate victims consumed by the flames and reduced to ashes! May men never forget that the vice sometimes produces very bitter fruit—disease, pain, repentance, and death!



## No. III.

### DELIRIUM TREMENS.

THE delirium from intemperance is of two kinds,—that which is present in a fit of intoxication, and ceases in a few hours; and that which afflicts habitual drunkards, occurring without any immediate previous stimulation, continuing at least for a number of days, and approaching, in its characteristics, to insanity. On the symptoms and nature of the latter affection, I propose to say something,—not for the use of the profession, but as information to the people at large.

This variety of mental alienation has received several names; of which *mania a potu*, and *mania e temulentia*, referring to the cause which produces it, *delirium tremens*, from the tremors to which drunkards are liable, and the *brain fever of drunkenness*, are the principal. I shall employ the epithet, *delirium tremens*.

Until within the last forty or fifty years, this affection was confounded with mania; or madness, from other causes. Since that time, it has attracted the attention of physicians; several of whom have written upon it. In its symptoms, it bears a close resemblance both to mania, and to delirium. In general it is characterized by great enervation of mind, connected with extraordinary apprehension of danger. In other forms of mental alienation there is apprehension also; but, I think, in all of them, it is more definite and constant in its object, than in delirium tremens. The hysteric is afraid of immediate death. The hypochondriac apprehends that he labors under a permanent malady, which must at last prove fatal, or believes himself in circumstances more unfavorable, than they appear to his friends. The mono-



maniac or melancholic, regards himself as the victim of a particular calamity which has no real existence. He makes and adheres to a single torturing assumption. The maniac is suspicious of every body, but especially of his friends; and continues in this state, until he becomes too insane to form conceptions of danger, or, indeed, of any thing else. The subject of delirium tremens exhibits, in most cases, an uncommon degree of terror, without being able, in many instances, to specify its object; or this object will vary from hour to hour. Hence his inconstancy is as great as his terror. His mind is feeble and fluctuating. It seems to resemble the body when affected with St. Vitus' dance; or it may be more properly compared to the body in the very disease under consideration. I know of no other malady in which the entire nervous system exhibits greater debility, or more deplorable perversion. The unsteadiness of the muscles, from nervous weakness, is so great, as to have suggested the epithet, tremens; and the disorder of the senses is such, that the individual is presented with false impressions of every kind. Thus the organs, by means of which he is to know what objects surround him, and on which he relies, in health, to correct the wanderings of his fancy, so far from doing either, perpetually impose falsehoods upon him, and terrify him with the strange and frightful objects which they engender. Hence he incessantly acts upon false information, and may often appear more delirious than he really is. There can be no doubt, however, that the nervous matter which is the organ of thought, partakes of the same disease, with those modifications of it, which constitute the organs of sense; and may, independently of the latter, originate absurdities the most whimsical, grotesque or alarming. Thus the immediate physical cause of this variety of mental alienation is an enervated

and irritable state of the nervous system, including the brain; and this is not the offspring of moral causes, but of excessive and protracted stimulation with alcohol. Hence it approaches closely in its character to the delirium of fevers. The patient exhibits less of permanent design, and is deficient in the sagacity which so often characterizes melancholy and madness, in reference to the use of means; can often be made conscious of the illusions which mislead him, even before they are entirely dispelled; and by strong addresses to his senses, may, for the moment, be recalled to himself, as happens in febrile delirium.

In several intemperate persons I have witnessed the curious intellectual abstraction, known among physicians by the name of *Reverie*. In the *American Medical Recorder* for January, 1819, I have published an account of two cases of this kind; and shall here transcribe such parts of it, as seem adapted to the objects of this paper.

“In the autumn of 1807, Mr. J., a gentleman from Baltimore, in consequence of a drunken frolic, sunk down in his chair insensible, and apparently apoplectic. In a few minutes convulsions supervened, and were succeeded by reverie. Upon the occurrence of the latter symptom, I made an attempt to administer a solution of *tartris antimonii et potassæ*, but without success. The spasms returned; and it was not till the second paroxysm of reverie, that the patient could be induced to swallow the emetic draught. In a few minutes after its exhibition, nausea and vomiting came on, and all the symptoms immediately ceased. The patient, however, resumed his dissipation, and in two days after was attacked a second time. I did not see him for several hours, during which time he had many alternate fits of convulsions and reverie. Six grains of the antimoniated tartrate were immediately dissolved, and offered to him when in the latter state, but refused. In a few minutes a violent convulsion recurred, and was succeeded by a paroxysm of reverie, so interesting in its character, that although somewhat foreign to my

present object, I flatter myself you will be amused with its history.

"During the maritime war that existed between the United States and France, in the year 1798, Mr. J. was second in command on board an American vessel, which was captured by a French privateer in the West Indies. It was this occurrence (a correct account of which I afterwards received from a gentleman who knew the circumstances) that constituted the subject of his reverie. He imagined the transaction to be then passing before him, and that he was performing in it a very important part, as had actually been the case. While stretched on his back, he kept his arms and the muscles of his face in constant motion; and in this way, as well as by his words, expressed, in a very forcible manner, that he was under the influence of the various emotions and passions that attend such an engagement as he was acting over before us. He received and gave orders, encouraged the men, and when he saw the captain fall (an event that happened) he actually shed tears, and uttered the most pathetic exclamations. This emotion, however, was temporary. Succeeding, as he supposed, and as had really been the case, to the chief command, he proceeded accordingly to conduct the fight and animate his men. But this agreeable state was soon followed by another, in which despair and mortification were most feelingly expressed. He was compelled to strike his flag and go on board the enemy's ship, when he went through the ceremony with one of the attendants, of delivering up his sword. He then complained of great fatigue, and asked permission to lie down on deck, and be covered with his own colors. This, as he supposed, being granted, he directed his servant to bring him a glass of water. The solution which had been repeatedly offered to him during the paroxysm, without attracting his attention in the slightest degree, was now accepted and drunk with avidity. In fifteen or twenty minutes the consciousness of his present existence was restored, with perfect sanity of mind; copious vomiting ensued, and the spasms were cured.

"In the ensuing summer, I was requested to visit E. C., a man affected with convulsions; and occasionally attended him for several years. While employed in his ordinary business, that of a drayman, he was frequently compelled to make extra-

ordinary exertions, and remain from home for the whole day, sometimes exposed to the heat of the sun, and at other times to inclement weather; during which time he would drink freely of ardent spirits, and take but little food. The effects of these irregularities, not uncommonly, were great distension and pain of the stomach, followed in a longer or shorter time by general convulsions. When first called to treat this disease, I employed blood-letting; but found it necessary afterwards to administer an emetico-cathartic, the operation of which gave complete relief. In my subsequent attendance on him, nearly the same course was pursued. In some of the attacks, very little blood was drawn; and in others, none at all. In every case, the principal, if not an exclusive, reliance was placed on evacuations from the alimentary canal. For this purpose I generally employed the tartris antimonii et potassæ in solutions with sulphis sodæ, as being both speedy and active in its operation. It never failed to accomplish the object for which it was administered; but in some attacks I found it necessary to give an enormous quantity, before any effect could be produced. In one instance, especially, the stomach was so insensible to the stimulus of this compound, that a drachm of the tartrate and three ounces of the sulphate were taken before evacuations were excited, and these in the aggregate were by no means excessive.

"In the course of two or three years this disease underwent a considerable change of character. From the beginning the convulsions had been succeeded by a slight degree of mania and reverie; but at length these symptoms became much more considerable in proportion to the spasms; and, indeed, occurred a few times without any preceding or subsequent convulsions. The character of this derangement was not the same with that of Mr. J. The patient generally supposed himself engaged in the scenes and business which had occupied him just before the attack; but was seldom entirely inattentive to what was said by those about him. He would sometimes recognise them in their proper persons; but would not be persuaded by them of his aberrations. At other times, however, he was completely abstracted from all external impressions, exhibiting reverie in its perfect form. I recollect once to have seen him laboring under a perversion of mind and senses that was truly remarkable. He

had been seized with a convulsion that terminated before my arrival. Upon entering the room I found him sitting upon the bedside, partially insane. I proposed to him to take the usual emetico-cathartic; but he obstinately refused, alleging that he was not sick. He consented, however, to take medicine, if it were directed by Dr. Drake. I assured him that I was the person; but this he denied, and pronounced me to be Dr. C., who occasionally had been called to attend the family. Finding my assertions unavailing in the correction of this error of vision, I resorted to a simple stratagem, which answered the purpose. Taking my hat, I left the room under his immediate inspection, and re-entering soon after with a loud knock, was saluted in an audible tone by the family as Dr. Drake. I advanced to the bedside, gave him my hand, and was instantly recognised. He narrated to me, with some coherence, the imposition which had, as he conceived, been practised on him,—expressed his gratification at seeing me,—and swallowed, without hesitation, the draught which two minutes before had been resolutely refused. Emesis soon commenced, and his illusions vanished."

This remarkable affection may be regarded as a variety of the disease which is now under consideration.

In delirium tremens an inflammation of the brain, stomach, liver, or some other organ, may occasionally be present; but it should be regarded as an accidental, rather than an essential companion. No hereditary predisposition to madness is necessary to the production of this malady. It occurs in persons of all temperaments. I have, generally, seen it in men who had not yet attained the meridian of life; and, especially, in those who had drunk to excess, while they were yet very young.

It is sometimes a mortal disorder; or, to speak more accurately, the condition of the nervous system, of which delirium tremens is one of the symptoms, occasionally proves fatal. More commonly it either subsides, spontaneously, or yields to medical treatment. It is, therefore, in its nature, essentially a transient affection; and when it *seems* to become

permanent, the patient has probably had a predisposition to madness, and his disorder has been that, rather than delirium tremens. Hence it is absurd to sentence the individual afflicted with the malady under consideration, to a lunatic asylum; for while the legal investigation is still in progress the patient may be himself again. The complaint may, however, return; and I have known the same individual, in the course of several years, to experience repeated attacks.

A disposition to injure others is now and then present in this malady; but the violence which the patient meditates is oftener against himself, and occasionally leads to suicide. The self-murder of drunkards is, indeed, generally perpetrated in paroxysms of this malady.

The symptoms of bodily disease produced by intemperance, are revolting to the beholder; and when the drunkard was originally a man of good taste and correct moral sentiments, must frequently give even *him* an hour of self-disgust. An enlarged liver and nauseated stomach—dropsical feet—a puckered and scaly skin—a tottering gait and tremulous hands—a foetid breath—red eyes, and a bloated face, covered with brassy carbuncles,—present a most loathsome aspect; but it is not till delirium tremens is superadded—till the fiend of desolation has breathed the breath of ruin over all the faculties and feelings of the soul—that the picture receives its darkest shades. In this pitiable state, the understanding “reels to and fro like a drunken man;” the affections are poisoned; and the distempered senses present the fairest and dearest objects as frightful demons, from which, like a trembling coward, he seeks to escape by flight! Could young men be induced to contemplate such a spectacle of pity, contempt and horror, and connect it with the practice of drinking ardent spirits, they would certainly be deterred from early indulgence.



## No. IV.

### PHYSICAL REMEDIES FOR INTEMPERANCE.

IN the preceding Discourse I have expressed the conviction, that a medicinal remedy for intemperance would probably increase the number of cases, and thus do both good and harm. I see no reason for changing this opinion; but at the same time must acknowledge, that I have some valued acquaintances, whom I should be gratified to snatch from impending ruin, by any kind of remedy: and I know that many others feel the same anxiety in reference to their friends. Indeed, the cases of intemperance are so numerous, and the misery which they, respectively, bring upon friends and family is so distressing, that it is not wonderful that great numbers are in quest of a specific for that vice, regardless of the effects of such a discovery, on the next generation. But their search must eventuate like that for the Philosopher's Stone, or the Elixir of Life. The propensity to stimulate ourselves cannot be abolished, by the action of *any* physical agent. Some of them, however, which excite in us unpleasant sensations, may be dissolved in our favorite beverage, and so blend their disagreeable effects with those of the liquor, as to render it disgusting. Hence their efficacy depends on an association of ideas and sensations. Some of them act on the organs of taste and smell, others on the stomach, and others more directly on the mind. Thus a variety of substances may, in different persons, prove remedial; while nothing in nature is likely to be efficacious to all. The people understand this principle, and have now and then reduced it to practice, by concealing something loathsome in the ordinary beverage of



the drunkard, and leaving it to be discovered by himself. The disgust thus excited has occasionally worked out a cure; but it is far from infallible. I recollect a fact, mentioned, I think, by Sparman, a Swedish traveller in the Cape of Good Hope, which shows the difficulty of exciting this disgust. He was a naturalist, and took with him a barrel of brandy, into which he plunged specimens of every kind of snake, lizard, toad, and other small reptile, which he could find. At length, perceiving the vessel to emit a putrid stench, he examined into its condition, and found that the Hottentots, who were his collectors, had, notwithstanding the daily addition to it of all sorts of creeping things, drunk up the whole of the spirits in which they were steeped. These were Hottentots, to be sure; but Hottentots are men,—and men of considerable decency, compared with the majority of habitual drunkards both in Europe and the United States.

In regard to specifics for drunkenness, there are several drawbacks:

1. The propensity for drink is, in many cases, as may be inferred from what has just been said, so strong, that nothing can disgust the individual with his glass.

2. There is so much variety in temperaments and constitutions, that the agent which might cure one person will fail to cure another.

3. Several of the medicines which have been proposed, are so energetic in their effects, that, in broken down constitutions, they may do injury to health, and even destroy life.

4. It is, and always must be, extremely difficult to induce the majority of drunkards to take them.

5. Their effects, in many cases, are exceedingly transient.

On the whole, therefore, I think but little reliance should be placed upon physical means for the cure of drunkenness.

I will, however, enumerate such of the several medicines and secret nostrums, which have, within a few years, been recommended for this purpose, as have come to my knowledge; but not give special directions for their use, as I believe that they should only be taken under the observation of a skilful physician.

1. *Ammonia*.—This medicine, either in the state of “spirits of hartshorne” or “volatile salts,” is said to have cured drunkenness, in France; but the reports on its efficacy are contradictory,—and but little reliance ought, I suspect, to be placed upon it. It may be well to state, however, that ammonia is the best, known antidote for Prussic acid; an ingredient in the cordial called “Noyau” (no-yo) which is in common use, and has sometimes proved fatal. If great debility and insensibility should suddenly ensue upon taking a glass of this cordial, forty or fifty drops of spirit of hartshorne, or an even tea spoonful of powdered volatile salts, should be immediately taken, dissolved in a little water.

2. *Sulphuric acid*.—This has recently been proposed, in Germany, by Dr. Cramer; and Dr. Brinckle, of Philadelphia, has published some cases in which it was successful. It is to be mixed with brandy or whiskey, and the patient is to swallow glass after glass, of the mixture, until he becomes intoxicated.

3. *Tartar Emetic*, and *Ipecacuan*.—One or both of these, is said to constitute the active ingredient in Chambers’ and other nostrums. They are disguised with other medicines. The physicians have sometimes added antimonial wine, or tartar emetic, to the wine which the drunkard was about to drink, and ipecacuan to his brandy. In both these cases the quantity should not be so great as to vomit him. The good effect seems to result from the excitation of the slight-

est possible nausea. But the quantity necessary to produce this effect, in different persons, and even in the same person at different times, varies exceedingly; and hence the propriety of using the nauseant, uncombined with other substances; and the necessity of resorting, in its administration, to the aid of the profession.

4. Lastly, *Opium, Strong Coffee, Bitters*.—In my attempts to cure drunkenness I have, like other physicians, had recourse to these agents; not to destroy the propensity for stimulants, but to satisfy it with others less pernicious than ardent spirits. But I have been surprized to find, how difficult it is to induce a sot, (who may even ask for aid, and seem to ask in sincerity,) to accept of these substitutes. His courage, his pride, his self-control, and his perseverance, are as enervated as his limbs. He has but one determined purpose—which is to drink till he dies; and if you interpose, he declares, at once, that he shall die if he does not drink. Thus, being doomed to death in either alternative, he, not unnaturally, prefers to meet his fate in good spirits. But it is a great mistake, that a sudden breaking off would be mortal. Weakness, and many bad feelings, may be the consequence; but I have never seen any one die from such a step,—and every attempt at a *gradual* reformation, which I ever witnessed, turned out to be a failure. Desperate cases set reform at defiance, and require a revolution.









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